THE CAUSE AND CVRE OF A VVOVNDED CONSCIENCE.

By THO. FULLER, B.D.

PROV. 18. 14.

But a wounded Conscience who can beare?

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To The Right
HONOVRABLE,
and Vertuous Lady,
Frances Mannours,
Counteſſe of *Rutland*.

Madam,

BY *the Iudiciall Law of the Iewes, if a ſervant had children by a Wife which was given him by his Mr. though he himſelfe went forth free* Exod. 21. 4.

in the seventh year, yet his children did remain with his Master, as the proper goods of his possession. I *ever have been, and shall be a servant to that Noble Family, whence your* Honour *is extracted. And of late, in that house, I have been wedded to the pleasant embraces of a private life, the fittest* Wife *and meetest* Helper *that can be provided for a Student in troublesome times: And the same*

hath been bestowed upon me by the bounty of your Noble Brother, EDW: *Lord* MONTAGUE: *Wherefore what issue soever shall result from my minde, by his meanes most happily marryed to a retired life, must of due redound to his* Honour, *as the sole* Proprietarie *of my paines during my present condition. Now this* Booke *is my eldest Off-spring, which had it been a Sonne, (I mean,*

had it been a Worke of Masculine beauty and bigneſſe) it ſhould have matted as a Page in Dedication to his Honour. But finding it to bee of the weaker ſexe, little in ſtrength, and low in ſtature, may it bee admitted (Madam) to attend on your Ladyſhip, his Honours Siſter.

I need not mind your Ladyſhip how God hath meaſured outward happineſſe unto you by the

Cubit

Cubit of the Sanctuary, *of the largest size, so that one would be posed to wish more; then what your* Ladiship *doth enjoy. My prayer to God shall be, that shining as a Pearle of Grace here, you may shine as a Starre in Glory hereafter. So resteth*

Your Honours in

Boughton, Jan. 25. 1646.

all Christian offices,

Tho: Fuller.

To the Christian Reader

AS one *was not anciently* to want a *wedding garment* at a Marriage feast; So now adayes, wilfully to weare gaudy Cloathes at a Funerall, is justly censurable, as unsuiting with the occasion. Wherefore in this sad subject, I have endevored to decline all light and

and luxurious expreſſions: And if I bee found faulty therein, I cry and crave God and the Reader pardon. Thus deſiring that my pains may prove to the glory of God, thine, and my own edification, I reſt,

Thine in Chriſt Jeſus,

Thomas Fuller.

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THE CAUSE and CURE OF A wounded Conſcience.

I. Dialogue.

What a wounded Conſcience *is, wherewith the Godly and Reprobate may be tortured.*

Timotheus.

Eeing the beſt way never to know a wounded Conſcience, *by wofull experience, is ſpeedily to know it by a ſanctified conſideration thereof: Give me (I pray you) the deſcription of a* wounded Conſcience, *in*

the highest degree thereof.

Philologus. It is a *Conscience* frighted at the sight of * sin, and weight of Gods wrath, even unto the despaire of all pardon, *during the present Agony.*

*Psa.38. 3.

Tim. *Is there any difference betwixt a* broken * spirit, *and a* wounded Conscience, *in this your acception?*

*Psa.51. 17.

Phil. Exceeding much: for a *broken spirit* is to be prayed and laboured for, as the most healthfull and happy temper of the soule, letting in as much comfort, as it leakes out sorrow for sinne: Whereas a *wounded conscience* is a miserable maladie of the mind, filling it for the present with despaire.

Tim. *In this your sense, is not the* Conscience wounded *every time that the soule is smitten with guiltinesse for any sin committed?*

Phil. God forbid: otherwise his

his ſervants would bee in a ſad condition, as in the caſe of *David* * ſmitten by his owne heart, for being (as he thought) over-bold with Gods *Anointed*, in cutting off the skirt of *Sauls* garment; ſuch hurts are preſently heal'd by a *Plaiſter* of *Chriſts blood*, applyed by *faith*, and never come to that height to be counted and called *wounded Conſciences*.

* 1 Sam. 24.5.

Tim. *Are the* godly, *as well as the* wicked, *ſubject to this malady?*

Phil. Yes verily: *Veſſels of honour* as well as *veſſels of wrath* in this world, are ſubject to the *knocks* and *bruiſes* of a *wounded conſcience*. A patient *Job*, pious *David*, faithfull *Paul* may bee vexed therewith no leſſe then a curſed *Cain*, perfidious *Achitophel*, or treacherous *Judas*.

Tim. *What is the difference betwixt a* wounded concience

in the godly, *and in the* reprobate?

Phil. None at all; oft times in the parties apprehensions, both (for the time being) conceiving their estates equally desperate; little, if any, in the wideness and anguish of the *wound* it selfe, which (for the time) may be as tedious and torturing in the godly, as the wicked.

Tim. *How then doe they differ?*

Phil. Exceeding much in Gods intention, gashing the wicked, as Malefactors, out of Justice, but lancing the godly, out of love, as a Surgeon his Patients. Likewise they differ in the issue and event of the *wound*, which ends in the eternall confusion of the one, but in the correction and amendment of the other.

Tim. *Some have said, that in the midst of their pain, by this mark they may be distinguished, because*

the

the Godly, *when* wounded, *complaine moſt of their* Sinnes, *and the* wicked *of their* ſufferings.

Phil. I have heard as much; But dare not lay too much *ſtreſſe* on this ſlender ſigne, (to make it generally true) for feare of failing. For *ſorrow* for *ſin*, and *ſorrow* for *ſuffering*, are oft times ſo twiſted and interwoven in the ſame perſon, yea in the ſame ſigh and Groane, that ſometimes it is impoſſible for the partie himſelfe ſo to ſeperate and divide them in his owne ſenſe and feeling, as to know which proceedeth from the one and which from the other. Onely the All-ſeeing Eye of an infinite God is able to diſcerne and diſtinguiſh them.

Tim. *Informe me concerning the nature of* wounded conſciences *in the* wicked.

Phil. Excuſe me herein: I re-

member a Passage in S. * *Augustine*, who enquired what might be the cause that the *fall* of the *Angels* is not plainly set downe in the *Old Testament* with the manner and circumstances thereof, resolveth it thus: *God, like a wise Surgeon, would not open that wound which hee never intended to cure:* Of whose words thus farre I make use, that as it was not according to Gods pleasure to restore the Devils, so it being above mans power to cure a *wounded Conscience* in the *wicked*, I will not meddle with that which I cannot mend: Onely will insist on a *wounded conscience* in Gods children, where, by Gods blessing, one may be the instrument, to give some ease, and remedy unto their disease.

* *Angelicum vulnus verus medicus qualiter factum sit indicare noluit, dum illud postea curare non destinavit.* De mirab. Scrip. lib. 1. c. 2.

II. Dialogue.

What uſe they are to make thereof, who neither hitherto were (nor hapily hereafter ſhall be) viſited with a wounded Conſcience.

Tim. *ARe all Gods Children, either in their life or at their death, viſited with a* wounded Conſcience?

Phil. O no: God inviteth many, with his *Golden Scepter*, whom he never bruiſeth with his *rod of iron*. Many, neither in their converſion, nor in the ſequell of their lives, have ever felt that paine in ſuch a manner and meaſure, as amounteth to a *wounded conſcience*.

Tim *Muſt not the* pangs *in their* Travell *of the* new-birth *be*

painfull unto them?

Phil. Painfull, but in different degrees. The *Blessed Virgin Mary* (most hold) was deliver'd without any *paine*; as well may that *child* bee borne without *sorrow*, which is conceived without *sin*. The *women* of *Israel* were sprightfull and lively, unlike the *Egypti-*
*Exo.1. 19. *ans*. * The former favour none can have, in their *spirituall travell*, the latter some receive, who though other whiles tasting of legall frights and feares, yet God
*Psa.21. 3. so * *preventeth them with his blessings of goodnesse*, that they smart not so deeply therein as other men.

Tim. Who are those which commonly have such gentle usage in their conversion?

Phil. Generally such, who never were notoriously profane, and have had the benefit of godly educa'ion from pious parents.

In

In some Corporations, the sons of Free-men, bred under their Fathers in their Profession, may set up and exercise their Fathers *Trade*, without ever being bound *Apprentices* thereunto. Such children whose parents have been *Citizens* of new * *Jerusalem*, and have beene bred in the mystery of godlinesse, often times are entred into Religion without any *spirit of bondage* seizing upon them, a great benefit and rare blessing, where God in his goodnesse is pleased to bestow it.

* Gal. 4. 26. * Ephe. 2. 19. * Heb. 12. 22.

Tim. *What may be the reason of Gods so different dealing with his owne* Servants, *that some of them are so deeply, and others not at all afflicted with a* wounded Conscience?

Phil. Even so Father, because it pleaseth thee. Yet in *humility* these *Reasons* may be assigned. 1. To shew himselfe a *free Agent*, not con-

confined to follow the same precedent, and to deale with all as he doth with some. 2. To render the prospect of his proceedings the more pleasant to their sight, who judiciously survey it, when they meet with so much diversity and variety therein. 3. That men being both ignorant when, and uncertaine whether or not, God will visit them with *wounded Consciences*, may wait on him with humble hearts, in the worke of their salvation, *looking as the Eyes of the* * *Servants to receive Orders from the hand of their Master*, but what, when, and how they know not, which quickens their daily expectations, and diligent dependance on his pleasure.

* Psalme 123. 2.

Tim. *I am one of those, whom God hitherto hath not humbled with a* wounded Conscience: *Give me some instruction for my behaviour.*

Phil.

Phil. First be heartily thankfull to Gods infinite goodnesse, who hath not dealt thus with every one. Now because *Repentance* hath two parts, *Mourning*, and *mending*, or *Humiliation*, and *Reformation*, the more God hath abated thee, in the former, out of his Gentlenesse, the more must thou increase in the latter, out of thy *Gratitude*. What thy *Humiliation* hath wanted of other men, in the *depth* thereof, let thy *Reformation* make up in the *Bredth* thereof, spreading into an universall *Obedience* unto all Gods Commandements. Well may he expect more *worke* to be done by thy *Hands*, who hath laid lesse *Weight* to bee borne on thy *Shoulders*.

Tim. *What other use must I make of Gods kindnesse unto me?*

Phil. You are bound the more patiently to beare all Gods *rods*,

poverty,

poverty, ſickneſſe, d ſgrace, captivi-ty, &c. ſeeing God hath freed thee from the ſtinging ſcorpion of a *wounded Conſcience.*

Tim. *How ſhall I demeane my ſelfe for the time to come?*

Phil. Be not high minded, but feare; for thou canſt not infallibly inferre, That becauſe thou haſt not hitherto, hereafter thou ſhalt not taſte of a *wounded conſcience.*

Tim. *I will therefore for the future with continuall feare, wait for the comming thereof.*

Phil. Wait not for it with ſervile feare, but watch againſt it with conſtant carefulnes. There is a ſlaviſh feare to bee viſited with a *wounded Conſcience*, which feare is to bee avoided, for it is oppoſite to the free ſpirit of Grace, derogatory to the goodneſſe of God in his Goſpel, deſtructive to ſpirituall ioy, which

wee

we ought alwayes to have, and dangerous to the ſoule, warcking it with anxieties, and unworthy ſuſpitions. Thus to feare a *wounded Conſcience*, is in part to feele it, antidating ones miſery, and tormenting himſelfe before the time, ſeeking for that he would be loath to finde: like the wicked in the * Goſpel, of whom it is ſaid, *Mens hearts failing them for feare, and looking for theſe things which are comming.* Far be ſuch a feare from thee, and all good Chriſtians. *Luke 21.26.

Tim. *What feare then is it, that you ſo lately recommended unto me?*

Phil. One conſiſting in the cautions avoiding of all cauſes and occaſions of a *wounded conſcience*, conjoned with a confidence in Gods goodneſſe, that he will either preſerve us from, or protect us in the torture thereof; and if he ever ſends it, will ſanctifie

sanctifie it in us, to his Glory, and our Good. May I, you, and all Gods servants, ever have this *noble feare* (as I may terme it) in our hearts.

III. Dialogue.

Three solemne seasons when men are surprized with wounded Consciences.

Tim. *WHat are those times wherein men most commonly are assaulted with* wounded Consciences?

Phil. So bad a guest may visit a man at any houre of his life: For no season is unseasonable for God to be just, Sathan to be mischievous, and sinfull man to be miserable; yet it happeneth especially at three principall times.

Tim.

Tim. *Of these, wich is first?*

Phil. In the twilight of a mans conversion, in the very conflict and combat betwixt nature and Innitiall grace. For then he that formerly slept in carnall security, is awakened with his fearfull condition: *God*, as he saith, *Psal.* 50.21. *setteth his sinnes in order before his eyes. Inprimis*, the sin of his conception. *Item*, the sinnes of his childhood. *Item*, of his youth. *Item*, of his mans estate, &c. Or, *Inprimis*, sinnes against the first table. *Item*, sins against the second, so many of ignorance, so many of knowledge, so many of presumption severally sorted by themselves Hee committed sinnes confusedly, hudling them up in heaps, but God *sets them in order*, and methodizeth them to his hand.

Tim. *Sins thus set in order must needs be a terrible sight.*

Phil.

Phil. Yes surely, the rather because the Metaphor may seeme taken from setting an *Army in Battell array*. At this conflict in his first conversion, *Behold a troup* of sinnes *commeth*, and when God himselfe shall marshall them in *Rank* and *File*, what guilty conscience is able to endure the furious charge of so great and well order'd an Army?

Tim. *Suppose the party dies before he be compleatly converted in this* twilight *condition, as you terme it, what then becomes of his soule, which may seeme too good to dwell in utter darknesse with devils, and too bad to goe to the God of light?*

Phil. Your supposition is impossible. Remember our discourse onely concerneth the godly. Now God never is Father to abortive children, but to such who according to his appointment shall come to perfection.

Tim.

Tim. *Can they not therefore die in this interim before the worke of Grace be wrought in them?*

Phil, No verily: Christs bones were in themselves breakable, but could not actually be broken by all the violence in the world, because God hath fore-decreed, *A bone of him shall not be broken.* So we confesse Gods children mortall, but all the power of devil or man may not, must not, shall not, cannot kill them before their conversion, according to Gods election of them to life, which must be fully accomplished.

Tim. *What is the second solemn time, wherein* wounded consciences *assault men?*

Phil. After their conversion compleated, and this either upon the committing of a conscience-wasting sin, such as *Tertullian* calleth *Peccatum devoratorium salutis, or* upon the undergoing of some heavy affliction of a bigger *standard* and

proportion, blacker hue and complexion then what befalleth ordinary men, as in the cause of *Iob*.

Tim. *Which is the 3 rd, and last time, when* wounded Consciences *commonly walke abroad?*

Phil. When men lie on their death-beds, Sathan must now roare, or else for ever hold his peace: roare he may afterwards with very anger to vex himselfe, not with any hope to hurt us. There is mention in *Scripture of an evill day*, which is most applyable to the time of our *death*. We read also of an houre of *Isa. 58. 10. * temptation; and the * Prophet * Rev. 3. 7. tels us there is *a moment, wherein God may seeme to forsake us*. Now *Sathan* being no lesse cunning to finde out, then carefull to make use of his time of advantage, in that *moment* of that *houre* of that *day*, will put hard for our Soules, and we must expect a shrewd parting

parting blow from him.

Tim. *Your dolefull prediction disheartens me, for feare I be foild in my last encounter.*

Phil. Bee of good comfort: through Christ we shall be victorious, both in dying and in death it selfe. Remember Gods former favours bestowed upon thee. Indeed wicked men, from premisses of Gods power collect a conclusion of his Weakenesse, *Psal.* 78, 20. *Behold hee smot the Rock, that the waters gushed out and the streames over-flowed: can hee give Bread also? can he provide Flesh for his people?* But Gods children* by better *Logick*, from the prepositions of Gods former preservations, inferre his power and pleasure to protect them for the future. Bee assured, that *God* which hath beene the *God* of the *Mountaines*, and made our *Mountaines strong* in time of our

* 1 Sam. 7. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 10.

proſperity, will alſo be the God of the valleys, and lead us ſafe
*Pſa. 23. 4. * *through the valley of the ſhadow of death.*

IV. Dialogue.

The great torment of a wounded conſcience, proved by Reaſons and Examples.

Tim. IS *the paine of a* wounded Conſcience *ſo great as is pretended?*

Phil. *God ſaith it, we have
*Pro. 18 14. ſeene it, and others have felt it: Whoſe complaints, ſavour as little of diſſimulation, as their cries in a fit of the cholique, doth of counterfeiting.

Tim. *Whence comes this* wound *to be ſo great and grievous?*

Phil. Six Reaſons may be aſſigned thereof. The firſt drawn from

from the *Heavineſſe of the hand* which makes the *Wound*; namely, God himſelfe, conceived under the notion of an infinite angry Judge. In all other afflictions, man encountreth onely with man, and in the worſt temptations, onely with *Sathan*, but in a *wounded Conſcience*, he enters the Liſts immediately with God himſelfe.

Tim. *Whence is the ſecond Reaſon fetcht?*

Phil. From the * *ſharpneſſe* of the *Sword*, where with the *wound is made*, being the Word of God, and the keen threatnings of the Law therein contained. There is mention *Gen.* 3. 24. of a *Sword turning every way*: parallel whereto is the Word of God in a *wounded Conſcience*. Mans heart is full of windings, turnings and doublings, to ſhift and ſhunne the

* Heb. 4. 12.

ſtroke thereof if poſſible, but this ſword meets them whereſoever they move, it fetches and finds them out, it haunts and hunts them, forbidding them during their Agony, any entrance into the Paradiſe of one comfortable thought.

Tim. *Whence is the third Reaſon derived?*

Phil. From the *tenderneſſe of the heart* it ſelf which is *wounded*; the *Conſcience* being one of the eyes of the ſoule, ſenſible of the ſmalleſt hurt. And when that *Callum*, *Schirrus* or *Incruſtation* drawn over it by nature, and hardned by cuſtome in ſinne, is once fleyed off, the *Conſcience* becomes ſo *pliant* and ſupple, that the caſt imaginable touch is painfull unto it.

Tim. *What is the fourth Reaſon?*

Phil. The Folly of the Patient:

who

who being ſtung, hath not the wiſedome to looke up to Chriſt, the *Brazen Serpent*, but tormenteth himſelfe with his owne activity. It was threatned to * *Paſhur*, *I will make thee a terrour to thy ſelfe*: So fareth it with Gods beſt Saint during the fit of his perplexed *Conſcience*; Heareth he his owne *voice*, he thinketh, this is that which ſo often hath *ſworne*, *lyed*, talked *vainly*, *wanton*, *wickedly*; his *voyce* is a *terrour to himſelfe*. Seeth he his own *eyes* in a glaſſe, he preſently apprehends, theſe are thoſe which ſhot forth ſo many envious, covetous, amorous *Glances*, *his* eyes are a terrour to himſelf. Sheep are obſerved to fly without cauſe, ſcared, (as ſome ſay) with the *ſound* of their own *feet*: Their feet knack, becauſe they fly, and they fly, becauſe their feet knack, an *emblem* of Gods

* Jer. 20. 4.

Children in a *wounded Conscience*; self-fearing, self-frighted.

Tim *What is the fift Reason which makes the paine so great?*

Phil. Because *Sathan* rakes his *clawes* in the *reeking blood* of a *wounded Conscience*. *Belzebub* the *devils* name signifieth in *Hebrew* the *Lord of flyes*; which excellently intimates his nature and employment. flyes take their felicity about *sores* and *galled Backs* to infest and inflame them. So *Sathan* no sooner discovereth (and that *Bird of Prey* hath *quick sight*) a Soule *terrour-struck*, but thither he hasts, and is busie to keepe the *wound raw*, there he is in his throne to doe mischiefe.

Tim *What is the sixt and last Reason why a* wounded conscience *is so great a torment?*

Phil. Because of the *impotency* and *invaliditie of all earthly receipts* to give ease thereunto. For there

is

is such a *gulfe* of *disproportion* betwixt a Mind-malady and Body-medicines, that no carnall, corporall comforts can effectually work thereupon.

Tim. *Yet wine in this case is prescried in Scripture*, * Give wine to the heavy hearted, that they may remember their misery no more. *Pro. 31 6.

Phil. Indeed if the *wound* be in the *spirits*, (those *cursiters* betwixt soule and body) to recover their decay or consumption, *wine* may usefully be applyed: but if the *wound* be in the *spirit* in *Scripture* phrase, all carnall, corporall comforts are utterly in vaine.

Tim. *Me thinks* merry company *should doe much to refresh him.*

Phil. Alas, a man shall no longer be welcome in *merry company*, then he is able to sing his Part

Part in their Joviall Consort. When a hunted *Deere* runs for safeguard amongst the rest of the *Herd*, they will not admit him into their company, but beat him off with their *hornes*, out of principles of selfe-preservation, for feare the *Hounds*, in pursuit of him, fall on them also. So hard it is for Man or beast in misery to find a faithfull freind. In like manner, when a knot of *Bad-good-fellowes* perceive one of their society dogg'd with Gods *terrours* at his heeles, they will be shut of him as soone as they can, preferring his roome, and declining his company, lest his sadnesse prove infectious to others. And now if all six reasons be put together, *so heavy a hand* smiting with so *sharp a sword* on so *tender a part* of so *foolish a patient*, whilst *Sathan seekes to widen*, and *no worldly plaister can cure* the

the wound, it sufficiently proves a *wounded conscience* to be an exquisite torture.

Tim. *Give me I pray an* example *hereof.*

Phil. When *Adam* had eaten the *forbidden fruit*, he tarryed a time in *Paradise*, but tooke no contentment therein. The *Sunne* did shine as *bright*, the *Rivers* ran as *cleare* as ever before, *Birds* sang as *sweetly*. *Beasts* played as *pleasantly*, *Flowres* smelt as *fragrant*, *Herbes* grew as *fresh*, *Fruits* flourisht as *faire*, no *Puntilio* of *Pleasure* was either altered or abated. The *objects* were the same, but *Adams eyes* were otherwise, his *nakednesse stood in his light*; a *thorne of guiltinesse grew in his heart*, before any *thistles* sprang out of the ground; which made him not to seeke for the *fairest fruits* to fill his *hunger*, but the *biggest leaves* to cover his

na-

nakednesse. Thus a *wounded conscience* is able to unparadise *Paradise* it selfe.

Tim. *Give me another instance?*

Phil. CHRIST JESUS our *Saviour*, he was blinded, buffeted, scourged, scoffed at, had his hands and feet nailed on the *Crosse*, and all this while said nothing. But no sooner apprehended he his *Father* deserting him, groaning under the burthen of the sins of mankind imputed unto him, but presently the *Lambe* (who hitherto *dumb before his shearer opened not his mouth*) for paine began to bleat, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Tim. *Why is a* wounded conscience *by* David *resembled to* Arrowes, * Thine Arrowes stick fast in me?

*Psa 38. 2.

Phil. Because an *Arrow* (especially if barbed) rakes and rends the flesh the more, the more mettall

tall the *wounded* party hath to strive and struggle withit: and a *guilty conscience* pierceth the deeper, whilest a stout stomack with might and main seeketh to outwrastle it.

Tim. *May not a* wounded conscience *also work on the body, to hasten and heighten the sickneſſe thereof?*

Phil. Yes verily, so that there may be employment for * *Luke, the beloved Physitian*, (if the same person with the *Evangelist*) to exercise both his professions: But we meddle onely with the malady of the mind, abstracted from any bodily indisposition. *Col 4. 14.

V. Dial.

V. Dialogue.

Sovereign uses to be made of the torment of a Wounded conscience.

Tim. *SEeing the torture of a* wounded conscience *is so great, what use is to be made thereof?*

Phil. Very much. And first, it may make men sensible of the intollerable paine in *Hell fire.* If the *mouth* of the *fiery Furnace* into which the *children* were cast, was so hot, that it burnt those which approached it, how hot was the *Furnace* it selfe? If a *wounded conscience*, the *suburbs* of *Hell*, be so painfull, oh how extreame is that place, *where the worme never dyeth, and the fire is never quenched?*

Tim.

Tim *Did our* roaring Boyes *(as they call them) but seriously consider this, they would not wish* God Damne Them, *and* God Confound Them *so frequently as they doe.*

Phil. No verily: I read in *Theodores* of the ancient *Donatists*, that they were so ambitious of Martyrdome, (as they accounted it) that many of them meeting with a young *Gentleman* requested of him, that hee would bee pleased to kill them. He, to confute their folly, condescended to their desire, on condition, that first they would be contented, to be all fast bound: which being done, accordingly he took order that they were all soundly whipt, but saved their lives. In application: When I heare such *Riotous youths* wish that God would *Damne* or *Confound* them, I hope God will be more mercifull, then

then to *take them at their words*; and to grant them their wish: only I heartily desire that hee would be pleased, sharply to scourge them, and soundly to lash them with the frights and terrours of a *wounded conscience*. And I doubt not, but that they would so ill like the paine thereof, that they would revoke their wishes, as having little list, and lesse delight to taste of *hell* hereafter.

Tim. *What other use is to bee made of the paine of a* wounded Conscience?

Phil. To teach us seasonably to prevent, what we cannot possibly endure. Let us shunne the smallest sinne, lest it wee slight and neglect it, it by degrees fester and gangreene into a *wounded conscience*. One of the bravest* *spirits* that ever *England* bred, or *Ireland* buried, lost his life by a light *hurt* neglected; as if it had been

*Sir Tho. Norris President of *Munster*, ex levi vulnere neglecto sublatus Cambdens Elizab. Anno 1641.

beene beneath his high minde to stoop to the dressing thereof, till it was too late. Let us take heed the stoutest of us be not so served in our Soules. If we repent not presently of our sinnes committed, but carelesly contemne them, a *scratch* may quickly prove an *ulcer*; the rather, because the flesh of our minde, if I may so use the Metaphor, is hard to heale, full of cholerick and corrupt humors, and very ready to rancle.

Tim. *What else may we gather for our instruction from the torture of a troubled mind?*

Phil. To confute their cruelty, who out of sport or spight, willingly and wittingly wound *weak consciences*; like those uncharitable* *Corinthians*, who so far improve their liberty in things indifferent, as thereby to wound the *Consciences* of their weake brethren.

* 1 Cor. 8. 12.

Tim. *Are not those Ministers to blame, who, mistaking their message, instead of bringing the Gospell of Peace, fright people with Legall terrours into despaire?*

Phil. I cannot commend their discretion, yet will not condemne their intention herein. No doubt their desire and designe is pious, though they erre in the pursuite and prosecution thereof, casting downe them whom they cannot raise, and conjuring up the *Spirit of Bondage* which they cannot allay againe: Wherefore it is our wisest way, to inter-weave promises with threatnings, and not to leave open a pit of despaire, but to cover it again with comfort.

Tim. *Remaineth there not as yet, another use of this point?*

Phil. Yes, to teach us to pitty and pray for those that have afflicted

flicted Consciences, not like the wicked, * *who persecute those whom God hath smitten, and talke to the griefe of such whom he hath wounded.* *Isa.69. 26.

Tim. *Yet* Eli *was a good man, who notwithstanding censured* Hannah, *a woman of a sorrowfull spirit, to be drunke with* Wine. *1Sam.1 13, 14.

Phil. Imitate not *Eli* in committing, but amending his fault. Indeed his dimme eyes could see *drunkennes* in *Hannah* where it was not, and could not see *Sacriledge* & *Adultery* in his own *Sonnes*, where they were. Thus those who are most indulgent to their owne, are most censorious of others. But *Eli* afterwards perceiving his Errour, turned the condemning of *Hannah* into praying for her. In like manner, if in our passion wee have prejudiced, or injur'd any *wounded Consciences*, in cold blood let us make them the

best amends and reparation.

VI. Dialouge.

That in some cases more Repentance must bee preached to a wounded Conscience.

Tim. *So much for the Maladie, now for the Remedy. Suppose you come to a* wounded Conscience, *what counsell will you prescribe him?*

Phil. If after hearty prayer to God for his direction, he appeareth unto me, as yet, not truely penitent, in the first place I will presse a deeper degree of Repentance upon him.

Tim. *O miserable Comforter! more sorrow still! Take hied your eyes be not put out with that* smoaking Flax, *you seeke to quench, and your fingers wounded with the* splinters

ters *of that* bruised Reed *you see about to breake.*

Phil. Understand mee Sir, Better were my tongue spit out of my mouth, then to utter a word of griefe to drive them to despaire, who are truly contrite. But on the other side, I shall betray my trust, and be found an unfaithfull dispencer of *Divine mysteries*, to apply comfort to him who is not ripe and ready for it.

Tim. *What harme would it doe?*

Phil. Raise him for the present, and ruine him, without Gods greater mercy for the future. For comfort dawbed on, on a foule soule, will not stick long upon it: And instead of pouring in, I shall spill the precious oyle of Gods mercy. Yea I may justly bring a *Wounded Conscience* upon my selfe, for dealing deceitfully

ceitfull in my Stewardſhip.

Tim. *Is it poſſible one may not be ſoundly humbled, and yet have a* wounded Conſcience?

Phil. Moſt poſſible: For a *wounded Conſcience* is often inflicted as a puniſhment for lacke of true Repentance: great is the difference betwixt a mans being frighted at, and humbled for his ſinnes. One may paſſively be caſt downe by Gods terrours, and yet not willingly throw himſelfe downe, as he ought, at Gods foot-ſtoole.

Tim. *Seeing his paine is ſo pittifull as you have formerly proved; why would you adde more griefe unto him?*

Phil. I would not adde griefe to him, but alter griefe in him; making his ſorrow, not greater, but better. I would endeavour to change his diſmall, dolefull dejection, his hideous, and horrible

rible heavines, his bitter exclamations, which seeme to me much mixed in him, with Pride, impatience, and impenitence, into a willing submission to Gods pleasure, and into a kindly, gentle, tender Gospel-repentance, for his sinnes.

Tim. *But there are some now adayes who maintaine that a Child of God after his first conversion, needeth not any new repentance for sinne all the dayes of his life.*

Phil. They defend a grievous and dangerous errour. Consider what two petitions Christ coupleth together in his Prayer: When my Body which every day is hungry, can live without Gods *giving it daily Bread*, then and no sooner shall I beleeve, that my Soule, which daily sinneth, can spiritually live, without Gods *forgiving it its Trespasses*.

Tim. *But such alledge, in pro-*

of their opinion, that a man hath his person justified before God, not by peices and parcels, but at once and for ever in his conversion.

Phil. This being granted doth not favour their errour. We confesse God finished the Creation of the world, and all therein in six dayes, and then rested from that worke, yet so, that his daily preserving of all things by his providence, may still be accounted a constant and continued Creation. We acknowledge in like manner, a Child of God Justified at once in his conversion, when he is fully and freely estated in Gods favour. And yet seeing every daily sinne by him committed, is an aversion from God, and his daily Repentance a conversion to God, his justification in this respect, may be conceived intirely continued all the dayes

of

of his life.

Tim *What is the difference betwixt the first Repentance, and this renewed Repentance?*

Phil. The former is as it were the putting of life into a dead man, the latter the recovering of a ſicke man from a dangerous ſwound; by the former, ſight to the blind is ſimply reſtored, and eyes given him, in the latter, only a filme is removed, drawne over their eyes, and hindering their actuall ſight. By the firſt we have a right title to the Kingdome of Heaven: By our ſecond repentance, wee have a new claime to Heaven, by vertue of our old title. Thus theſe two kinds of repentance may be differenced and diſtinguiſhed though otherwiſe they meet and agree in generall qualities: both having ſinne for their Cauſe, ſorrow for their Companion,

and

and pardon for their consequent and effect.

Tim. *But are not Gods Children after committing of grievous sinnes, and before their renewing their repentance remaine still heires of Heaven, married to Christ, and Citizens of the new Hierusalem?*

Phil. Heires of Heaven, they are, but disinheritable for their misdemeanour. Married still to Christ, but deserving to be divorced for their adultery. Citizens of Heaven, but yet outlawed, so that they can recover no right, and receive no benefit, till their outlawry be reversed.

Tim. *Where doth God in Scripture injoyne his second Repentance on his owne Children?*

Phil. In severall places. He threatneth the * *Church of Ephesus* (the best of the seaven) with *removing the Candlestick from them;*

*Rev. 2. 5.

them, except they repent: And Christ telleth his own Disciples, true converts before, but then guilty of Ambitious thoughts, that * except yee bee converted yee shall not enter into the Kingdome of Heaven. Here is conversion after conversion, being a solemne turning from some particular sinne; in relation to which it is not absurd to say, that there is justification after justification; the latter as following in time, so flowing from the former.

*Mat. 18 3.

VII.

Onely Christ is to bee applyed to Soules truly contrite.

Tim. But suppose the Person in the Ministers apprehension heartily humbled for sinne, what then is to be done?

Phil. No Corrosives, all Cordials; no Vineger, all Oyle, no Law, all Gospel must be presented unto him. Here blessed the lippes, yea beautifull the feet of him that bringeth the tidings of peace. As * *Elisha*, when reviving the *Sonne of the Shunamite* laid his *mouth to the mouth of the Child*. So the gaping orifice of Christs *wounds* must spiritually by preaching, be put close to the *mouth* of the *wounds of a Conscience*: Happy that skillfull *Architect*, that can shew the sicke man, that the * *Head-stone* of his spirituall building, must be laid with shouts, crying *Grace, Grace.*

* 2 Kings 4. 34

* Zach. 4. 7.

Tim. *Which doe you count the* Head-stone *of the Building, that which is first or last laid?*

Phil. The foundation is the *Head-stone* in honour, the *top-stone* is the *Head-stone* in height

The

The former the *Head stone* in strength, the latter in stature. It seemeth that Gods spirit, of set purpose made use of a doubtfull word, to shew that the whole fabricke of our salvation, whether as founded, or as finished, is the only worke of Gods grace alone. Christ is the *Alpha* and *Omega* thereof, not excluding all the letters in the Alphabet interposed.

Tim. *How must the Minister preach Christ to an* afflicted Conscience?

Phil. He must crucifie him before his eys, lively setting him forth, naked, to cloath him; wounded, to cure him; dying, to save him. He is to expound and explaine unto him, the dignity of his person, pretiousnesse of his blood, plenteousnesse of his mercy, in all those loving relations, wherein the Scripture pre-

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presents him: A kind *Father* to a prodigall *Child*, a carefull *Hen* to a scatter'd *Chicken*, a good *Shepheard* that bringeth his lost *Sheep* back on his shoulders.

Tim. *Spare me one question, why doth he not drive the sheepe before him, especially seeing it was lively enough to lose it selfe?*

Phil. First, because though it had wildnesse too much to goe astray, it had not wisedome enough to goe right. Secondly, because probably the silly sheep, had tired it selfe with wandring; *Habakkuk* 2. 13. The people shall weary themselves for very vanity, and therefore the kind sheepheard brings it home on his owne shoulders.

Tim. *Pardon my interruption, and proceed, how Christ is to be held forth.*

Phil. The latitude and extent of his love, his invitation without

out exception, are powerfully to be preſt; *every one that thirſteth, all yee that are heavy laden, whoſoever beleeveth*, and the many promiſes of mercy are effectually to be tendered unto him.

Tim. *Where are theſe promiſes in* Scripture?

Phil. Or rather, where are they not? for they are harder to be miſt, then to be met with. Open the *Bible* (as he * drew his Bow in Battle) at adventures. If thou lighteſt on an Hiſtoricall place, behold Precedents, if on a Doctrinall, promiſes of comfort. For the latter, obſerve theſe particulars, *Gen.* 3.15. *Exo.* 33.6. *Iſai.* 40.1. *Iſai.* 54.11. *Mat.* 11.28. *Mat.* 12.20. 1 *Cor.* 10.13. *Heb.* 13.5. &c. * 1 Kings 22.

Tim. *Are theſe more principall places of conſolation, then any other in the* Bible?

Phil. I know there is no chooſing

sing, where all things are choi-
cest: Whosoever shall select
some Pearles out of such a heap,
shall leave behind as precious as
any he takes, both in his owne
and others judgment; yea which
is more, the same man at seve-
ral times may in his apprehensi-
on preferre severall promises as
best, formerly most affected
with one place, for the present
more delighted with another;
and afterwards conceiving com-
fort therein not so clear, choose
other places as more pregnant,
and pertinent to his purpose.
Thus God orders it, that divers
men (and perchance the same
man at different times) make
use of all his promises, gleaning
and gathering comfort, not only
in one furrow, Land, or furlong;
but as its scattered clean through
the whole *field* of the *Scripture*.

Tim. *Must Ministers have vari-*
ety

ety of ſeverall comfortable promiſes?

Phil. Yes ſurely: ſuch *Maſters of the Aſſembly* being to enter and faſten conſolation in an afflicted ſoule, need have many *vailes* provided aforehand, that if ſome for the preſent, chance to drive untowardly, as ſplitting, going awrie, turning crooked or blunt, they may have others in the roome thereof.

Tim. *But grant, Chriſt held out never ſo plainly, preſt never ſo powerfully, yet all is in vaine except God inwardly with his ſpirit perſwade the* wounded conſcience *to beleeve the Truth of what hee ſaith.*

Phil. This is an undoubted Truth, for one may lay the *Bread of Life* on their trencher, and cannot force them to feede on it. One may bring them downe to

the *Spring of Life*, but cannot make them drinke of the waters thereof; and therefore in the cure of a *wounded Conscience*, God is all in all, only the touch of his hand, can* heale this *Kings Evill*, *I kill and make alive, I wound and I heal, neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.*

* Deut. 32.39

VIII. Dialogue.

Answers to the objections of a wounded Conscience *drawne from the grievousnesse of his sinnes.*

Tim. *GIve me leave now Sir to personate and represent a* wounded Conscience, *and to alledge and inforce such principall objections wherewith generally they are grieved.*

Phil. With all my heart, and God

God blesse my endeavours in answering them.

Tim. *But first I would be satisfied how it comes to passe, that men in a* wounded Conscience *have their parts so presently improved. The* Jewes *did question concerning our* Savior, * How knoweth this man letters being never learned? *But here the doubt, and difficulty is greater; How come* simple people *so subtile on a sudden to oppose with that advantage, and vehemency, that it would puzzle a good and grave* Divine *to answer them?*

Phil. Two Reasons may be rendred thereof. 1. Because a man in a distemper, is stronger then when he is in his perfect health: What *Sampsons* are some in the fit of a *Feaver?* Then their spirits, being intended by the violence of their disease, push with all their power. So is

* John 7. 15.

it in the agony of a distressed soule, every string thereof is strained to the height, and a man becomes more then himselfe to obiect against himselfe in a fit of despaire.

Tim. *What is the other Reason?*

Phil. Sathan himselfe, that subtile *sophister* assisteth them. Hee formes their arguments, frames their objections, fits their distinctions, shapes their evasions; and this *discomforter* (Aping Gods spirit the Comforter, *John* 14.26.) *bringeth all things to their remembrance*, which they have heard or read to dishearten them. Need therefore have Ministers, when they meddle with afflicted men, to call to Heaven afore-hand to assist them, being sure, they shall have Hell it selfe to oppose them.

Tim.

Tim. *To come now to the Objections, which* afflicted Consciences *commonly make: they may be reduced to three principall Heads. Either drawne from the greatnesse and grievousnesse of their sinnes, or from the sleightnesse and lightnesse of their repentance, or from the faintnesse and feeblenes of their faith. I begin with the objections of the first form.*

Phil. I approve your method I pray proceed.

Tim. *First Sir, even since my conversion, I have been guilty of many grievous sinnes, and (which is worse) of the same sinne many times committed. Happy* * Judah, *who though once committing incest with* Thamar, *yet the text saith, that afterward he* knew her again no more. *But I vile wretch have often re-fallen into the same offence.*

* Gen. 38. 36.

Phil. All this is answered in

*Isa.1.18 Gods *Promise* in the * *Prophet*, *Though your sinnes be as scarlet, I will make them as snow.* Consider how the *Tyrian scarlet* was dyed, not overly dipt, but throughly drencht in the liquor, that coloured it, as thy soul in custome of sinning. Then was it taken out for a time, and dryed, put in againe, soakt, and sodden the second time in the Fatt; called therefore διβαφον, twice dyed; as thou complainest thou hast been by relapsing into the same sinne. Yea the colour so incorporated into the cloath not drawne over, but diving into the very heart of the wool, that rub a scarlet rag on what is white, and it will bestow a redish tincture upon it: As perchance thy sinfull practice, and president, have also infected those which were formerly good, by thy badnesse. Yet such scarlet sins so

so solemnly and substantially coloured, are easily washt white in the blood of our *Saviour*.

Tim. *But, Sir, I have sinned against most serious resolutions, yea against most solemne Vowes which I have made to the contrary.*

Phil. Vow breaking, though a grievous sinne, is pardonable on unfaigned repentance. If thou hast broken a Vow, tye a knot on it, to make it hold together again. It is spirituall thrift, and no mis-becomming baseneſſe to piece and joynt thy neglected promises with freſh ones. So shall thy Vow in effect bee not broken, when new mended: and remain the same, though not by one entire continuation, yet by a constant successive renovation thereof. Thus * *Jacob* renewed his neglected Vow of going to *Bethel*; And this must thou doe, re-inforce thy broken Vows, if

* Compare Gen 28. 20. with Gen 35. 1.

of moment, and materiall.

Tim. What mean you by the addition of that clause, *if* of moment and material?

Phil. To deale plainly, I dislike many vowes men make, as of reading just so much, and praying so often every day, of confining themselves to such a strict proportion of meate, drinke, sleepe, recreation, &c. Many things may be well done, which are ill vowed. Such particular vowes men must bee very sparing how they make. First, because they favour somewhat of Will-worship. Secondly, small glory accrews to God thereby. Thirdly, The dignity of vowes are disgraced by descending to too triviall particulars. Fourthly, Sathan hath ground given him to throw at us, with a more steady aim. Lastly, such vowes, instead of being cords to tie us fast

faster to God, prove knots to entangle our Consciences: Hard to bee kept, but oh! how heavy when broken? Wherefore setting such vowes, aside, let us be carefull with *David*, to keep that grand and generall vow, *I have sworn, and will performe it, that I will keep thy righteous judgements.* * Psal. 119.106

Tim. *But Sir I have committed the* sinne *against the* Holy Ghost, *which the* Saviour *of mankinde pronounceth unpardonable, and therefore all your counsels and comforts unto me are in vaine.*

Phil. The Devill, the father of lyes, hath added this lye to those, which hee hath told before, in perswading thee, thou hast committed the *sinne* against the *Holy Ghost.* For that sinne is ever attended with these two symptomes. First, the party guilty thereof never grieves for it, nor

nor conceives the least sorrow in his heart, for the sinne he hath committed. The second (which followeth on the former) hee never wisheth or desireth any pardon, but is delighted, and pleased with his present condition. Now if thou canst truly say, that thy sinnes are a burden unto thee, that thou dost desire forgiveneſſe, and wouldest give any thing, to compasse and obtaine it; bee of good comfort, thou hast not as yet, and by Gods Grace, never shalt, commit that unpardonable offence. I will not define how neere thou hast beene unto it. As *David* said to *Jonathan*, *there is not a haires breadth betwixt death and me*: So it may be thou hast mist it very narrowly, but assure thy selfe, thou art not as yet guilty thereof.

IX. Dia-

IX. Dialogue.

Answers to the Objections of a Wounded Conscience drawn from the sleightnesse of his Repentance.

Tim. *I believe my sinnes are pardonable in themselves, but alas my stony Heart is such, that it cannot relent and repent, and therefore no hope of my Salvation.*

Phil. Wouldest thou sincerely repent? thou dost repent. The women that came to embalme * Christ, did carefully forecast with themselves, *Who shall role away the stone from the doore of the Sepulcher?* Alas their fraile, faint, feeble Arms were unable to remove such a weight. But what followeth? *And when they*

Mark 16 3.

they looked they saw that the stone was rolled away, for it was very great. In like manner, when a soule is truly troubled about the massie mighty burden of his stonyheart interposed, hindring him from comming to Christ, I say when he is seriously and sincerely solicitous about that impediment, such desiring is a doing, such wishing is a working. Do thou but take care it may be removed, and God will take order it shall bee removed.

Tim. *But Sir I cannot weep for my sinnes, My eyes are like the pit wherein* Joseph *was put, there is no water in them, I cannot squeeze one teare out of them.*

Phil. Before I come to answer your Objection, I must premise a profitable Observation. I have taken notice of a strange opposition betwixt the Tongues and Eyes of such as have

have *troubled Consciences.* Their tongues some have known (and I have heard) complaine that they cannot weepe for their sinnes, when at that instant their eyes have plentifully shed store of teares: not that they spake out of dissimulation, but distraction. So sometimes have I smiled at the simplicity of a Child, who being amased, and demanded whether or no hee could speake? hath answered, *No.* If in like manner at the sight of such a contradiction betwixt the words and deeds of one in the agony of a *wounded Conscience*, wee should chance to smile, knew us not to jeere, but joy, perceiving the party in a better condition, then he conceiveth himselfe.

Tim. *This your observation may be comfortable to others, but is impertinent to me. For as I told you I have*

I have by nature such dryness that they will afford no moisture to bemoan my sinnes.

Phil. Then it is a naturall defect, and no morall default, so by consequence a suffering and no sinne, which God will punish. God doth not expect the cock should runne water, where he put none into the Cisterne. Know also, their hearts may be fountaines whose eyes are flints, and may inwardly bleed, who doe not outwardly weep. Besides * Christ was sent to *preach Comfort*, not to such only as *weep*, but *mourne* in *Zion*. Yea if thou canst squeeze out no liquor, offer to God the empty bottles; instead of teares, tender and present thy eyes unto him. And though thou beest water-bound, be not wind-bound also, sigh, where thou canst not sob, and let thy *Lungs* doe what thy *eyes* cannot performe.

*Isa. 61. 3

Tim-

Tim. *You say something, though I cannot weep, in case I could soundly sorrow for my sinnes. But alas, for temporall lasses and crosses, I am like* Rachell, lamenting for her children, and would not be comforted. *But my sorrow for my sins is so small, that it appeares none at all in proportion*

Phil. In the best Saints of God, their sorrow for their sinnes being measured with the sorrow for their sufferings, in one respect, will fall short of it, in another must equall it, and in a third respect doth exceed and goe beyond it. Sorrow for sins falleth short of sorrow for sufferings, in loud lamenting or violent uttering it selfe in outward expressions thereof, as in roaring, wringing the hands, rending their haire, and the like. Secondly, both sorrowes are equall in their truth and sincerity,

ly, both farre from hypocrisie free from dissimulation, reall hearty, cordiall, uncounterfeited. Lastly, sorrow for sinne exceeds sorrow for suffering, in the continuance and durablenesse thereof: the other like a land-flood, quickly come, quickly gone; this is a continuall dropping or running river, keeping a constant stream. *My sinne saith David, are ever before me*; so also is the sorrow for sinne in the soule of a child of God, morning, evening, day, night, when sicke, when sound, feasting, fasting, at home, abroad, ever within him: This griefe beginneth at his conversion, continueth all his life, endeth only at his death.

Tim. *Proceed I pray in this comfortable point.*

Phil. It may still be made plainer by comparing two dif-

cases

sers together, the *tooth-ache* and *consumption*. Such as are troubled with the former, shreek and cry out, troublesome to themselves, and others, in the same and next roofe; and no wonder, the *mouth* it self being *plaintiffe*, if setting forth its own grievances to the full. Yet the *tooth-ache* is known to be no mortall maladie, having kept some from their beds, seldome sent them to their graves; hindred the sleep of many, hastned the death of few. On the other side, hee that hath an incurable *consumption* saith little, cryes lesse, but grieves most of all. Alas, he must be a good husband of the little breath left in his broken lungs, not to spend it in sighing, but in living, he makes no noise, is quiet, and silent; yea none will say, but that his inward griefe is greater then the former.

Tim. *How apply you this Comparison to my objection?*

Phil. In corporall calamities, thou complaineſt more, like him in the *tooch-ache*, but thy ſorrow for thy ſinne, like a *Conſumption*, which lyes at thy heart, hath more ſolid heavineſſe therein. Thou doſt take in more griefe for thy ſinnes, though thou mayeſt take on more grievouſly for thy ſufferings.

Tim. *This were ſomething if my ſorrow for ſinne were ſincere, but alas, I am but a hypocrite.*
*Iſ.14. 23. *There is* * *mention in the Prophet of Gods* beſome of deſtruction; *now the truſt of a hypocrite*, Job 8.14. *is called a* Spiders web, *here is my caſe, when Gods* beſome *meets with the* cobwebs *of my hypocriſie, I ſhall bee* ſwept *into* hel-fire.

Phil. I anſwer, firſt in *generall*: I am glad to heare this objection

jection come from thee, for self-suspition of hypocrisie, is a hopefull symptome of sincerity. It is a *David* that cryes out, *As for me I am poore and needy*; but lukewarm *Laodicea* that braggeth, *I am rich and want nothing.*

Tim. *Answer I pray the objection in* particular.

Phil. Presently, when I have premised the great difference, betwixt a mans being a *Hypocrite*, and having some hypocrisie in him. Wicked men are like the *Apples* of * *Sodome*, seemingly faire, but nothing but *ashes* within, the best of Gods Servants, like sound *Apples*, lying in a dusty loft, (living in a wicked world) gathering much dust about them, so that they must be rubb'd or pared, before they can bee eaten. Such notwithstanding are sincere, and by the following *markes* may

* *Solinus Polybistor in Iudea.*

examine themselves.

Tim. *But some now adayes are utter enemies to all* marks *of sincerity* counting *it needlesse for* Preachers *to propound, or* people *to apply them.*

Phil. I know as much; but it is the worst signe, when men in this nature hate all signes: But no wonder if the *foundred horse*, cannot abide the *Smiths pincers*,

Tim. *Proceed I pray in your signes of sincerity.*

Phil. Art thou carefull to order thy very *thoughts*, because the infinite *Searcher of the Heart* doth behold them? Dost thou freely and fully confesse thy sinnes to God, spreading them open in his presence, without any desire or endeavour to deny, dissemble, defend, excuse, or extenuate them? Dost thou delight in an universall

obedi-

obedience to all *Gods Laws*, not thinking with the superstitious *Jewes*, by over-keeping the fourth *Commandement*, to make reparation to God for breaking all the rest? Dost thou love their persons and Preaching best, who most clearly discover thine own faults and corruptions unto thee? Dost thou strive against thy vindicative nature, not onely to forgive those who have offended thee, but also to wait an occasion with humility to fasten a fitting favour upon them? Dost thou love grace and goodnesse even in those, who differ from thee in point of *opinion*, and *Civil controversies*? Canst thou bee sorrowfull for the sinnes of others, no whit relating unto thee, meerly because the glory of a good God, suffers by their profaneneſſe?

Tim. *Why doe you make these to be the signes of sincerity?*

Phil. Because there are but two principles, which act in mens hearts, namely, *nature* and *grace*; or, as *Christ* distinguisheth them, *Flesh*, and *Blood*, and *our Father which is in Heaven*. Now seeing these actions, by us propounded, are either against or above nature, it doth necessarily follow, that where they are found, they flow from saving grace. For what is higher then the roofe, and very Pinacle, as I may say, of nature, cannot be lower then the bottome and beginning of grace.

Tim. *Perchance on serious search, I may make hard shift, to finde some one or two of these signes, but not all of them in my heart.*

Phil. As I will not bow to flatter any, so I will fall down as farre

farre as truth will give mee leave, to reach comfort to the humble, to whom it is due. Know to thy further consolation, that where some of these signes truly are, there are more, yea all of them, though not so visible and conspicuous, but in a dimmer and darker degree. When wee behold *Violets*, and *Prim-Roses*, fairly to flourish, we conclude the dead of the winter is past, though, as yet, no *Roses*, or *July-flowers* appear, which, long after, lye hid in their leaves, or lurk in their Rootes; but in due time will discover themselves. If some of these signes be above ground in thy sight, others are under ground in thy heart, and though the former started first, the other will follow in order: It being plain that thou art past from death unto life, by this

hopefull and happy ſpring of ſome ſignes in thy heart.

X. Dialogue.

Anſwers to the Objection of a wounded Conſcience, drawn from the feebleneſſe of his faith.

Tim. *BVt faith is that which muſt apply Chriſt unto us; whileſt (alas!) the hand of my faith hath not onely the ſhaking, but the dead Palſie; it can neither hold nor feele any thing.*

Phil. If thou canſt not hold God, doe but touch him and hee ſhall hold thee, and put feeling into thee. Saint *Paul* ſaith, * *If that I may apprehend that for which alſo I am apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus.* It is not *Pauls* apprehending of *Chriſt*, but *Chriſt* appre-

* Phil. 3. 19.

apprehending of *Paul*, doth the deed.

Tim. *But I am sure my faith is not sound, because it is not attended with assurance of salvation. For I doubt (not to say despaire) thereof. Whereas* Divines *hold, that the Essence of saving faith consists in a certainty to be saved.*

Phil. Such deliver both a false, and dangerous doctrine; as the careless mother * killed her little *infant, for shee over-laid it*: So this opinion would presse many weak faiths to death, by laying a greater weight upon them then they can bear, or God doth impose; whereas to be assured of salvation, is not a part of every true faith, but onely an effect of some strong faiths, and that also not alwayes, but at some times.

* 1 King. 3.19.

Tim. *Is not certainty of salvation apart of every true faith?*

Phil.

Phil. No verily, much lesse is it the life and formality of faith, which consisteth onely in a recumbency on God in Christ, with *Iob's* resolution, * *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* Such an adherence, without an assurance, is sufficient by Gods mercy to save thy soule. Those that say that none have a sincere faith without a certainty of salvation, may with as much truth maintain, that none are the Kings loyall Subjects, but such as are his *Favorites.*

* Job 13. 15.

Tim. *Is then* assurance of salvation *a peculiar personall* favour, *indulged by God, onely to some particular persons?*

Phil. Yes verily: Though the *salvation* of all Gods *servants* be sure in it selfe, yet is onely *assured* to the apprehensions of some *select* people, and that at some times: For it is too fine *stuff* for the

the best man to *feed* on every day.

Tim. *May they that have this* assurance, *afterwards lose it?*

Phil. Undoubtedly they may: God first is gracious to give it them, they for a time carefull to keep it, then negligently lose it, then sorrowfull seeke it. God again is bountifull to restore it, they happy to recover it, for a while diligent to retain it, then again fooliſh to forfeit it, and so the same changes in ones life time often, over, and over againe.

Tim. *But some will say, If I may be infallibly saved without this* Assurance, *I will never endeavour to attain it.*

Phil. I would have *covered* my *flowers*, if I had suspected such *spiders* would have suckt them. One may goe to heaven without this *Assurance*, as certainly, but not

not so chearfully, and therefore prudence to obtaine our owne comfort, and piety to obey Gods Command, obligeth us all to *give diligence to make our calling and election sure*, both in it selfe, and in our apprehension.

XI. Dialogue.

God alone can satisfie all objections of a wounded Conscience.

Tim. *BVt, Sir, these your Answers are no whit satisfactorie unto me.*

Phil. An Answer may be satisfactory to the Objection, both in it selfe, and in the judgement of all unprejudiced Hearers, and yet not satisfactorie to the Objecter, and that in two cases: First, when he is possessed with the spirit of peevishnesse and per-

perverseneſſe. It is loſt labour to ſeeke, to feed and fill thoſe, who have a greedy *Horſeleach* of cavilling in their heart, crying *Give, give.*

Tim. *What is the ſecond caſe?*

Phil. When the bitterneſſe of his ſoule is ſo great and grievous, that he is like the * *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, which *hearkned not to Moſes, for anguiſh of ſpirit, and for cruel bondage.* Now as thoſe who have meat before them, and will not eate, deſerve to ſtarve without pitty: ſo ſuch are much to be bemoaned, who through ſome impediment in their mouth, throat, or ſtomach, cannot chaw, ſwallow or digeſt comfort preſented unto them. *Exo. 6. 9.

Tim. *Such is my condition, what then is to be done unto me?*

Phil. I muſt change my precepts to thee into prayers for thee, that God would * *Satisfie thee early* *Pſal. 90. 14.

early with his mercy, that thou mayest rejoyce. Ministers may endeavour it in vain, whileſt they quell one ſcruple, they ſtart another, whilſt they fill one corner of a wounded Conſcience with comfort, another is empty. Onely God can ſo ſatisfie the ſoule, that each chink and cranny therein, ſhall bee filled with ſpirituall joy.

Tim. *What is the difference betwixt Gods, and mans* ſpeaking Peace *to a* troubled ſpirit?

Phil. Man can neither make him to whom he ſpeakes, to hear what he ſaith, or beleeve what hee heares. God ſpeakes with *authority*, and doth both. His words give *hearing* to the *deafe*, and *Faith* to the *Infidel*. When, not the *Mother* of *Chriſt*, but *Chriſt himſelf*, ſhall ſalute a *ſick ſoule* with *Peace bee unto thee*, it will leap for joy, as *John* the

the *babe* sprang, though imprisoned in the darke wombe of his Mother. Thus the *offender* is not comforted, though many of the spectatours, and under-*officers* tell him he shall be *pardoned*, untill he hears the same from the mouth of the Judge himself who hath power and place to forgive him; and then his heart reviveth with *comfort*.

Tim. *God send me such comfort: mean time, I am thankfull unto you for the answers you have given me.*

Phil. All that I will add is this. The *Lacedemonians* had a law, that if a bad man, or one diseteemed of the people, chanced to give good *counsell*, he was to stand by, and another, against whose person the people had no prejudice, was to speake over the same words, which the former had uttered. I am most

sensi-

ſenſible to my ſelfe of my owne badneſſe, and how juſtly I am ſubject to exception. Onely my prayer ſhall bee, that whileſt I ſtand by, and am ſilent, Gods Spirit which is free from any fault, and full of all perfection, would bee pleaſed to repeat in thy heart, the ſelfe-ſame anſwers I have given to your objections: And then what was weak, ſhallow and unſatisfying, as it came from my mouth, ſhall and will be full, powerfull, and ſatisfactory, as re-inforced in thee, by Gods Spirit.

XII. Dia.

XII. Dialogue.

Meanes to be used by wounded Consciences, *for the recovering of comfort.*

Tim. *ARe there any usefull meanes to be prescribed, whereby* wounded consciences *may recover comfort the sooner?*

Phil. Yes there are.

Tim. *But now adayes some condemne all using of meanes,* let Grace alone *(say they) fully and freely to doe its own worke: and thereby mans mind will in due time returne to a good temper of its own accord: This is the most spirituall serving of God, whilst using of* meanes, *makes but* Dunces *and* Trewants *in* Christs Schoole.

Phil. What they pretend spirituall, will prove aiery and emp-

ty, making lewd and lazie Christians. Meanes may and must be used with these cautions. 1. That they be of Gods appointment in his word, and not of mans meere invention. 2. That we still remember they are but meanes, and not the main. For to account of helps more then helpes, is the high way to make them hinderances. Lastly, that none rely barely on the *deed done*, which conceit will undoe him that did it, especially if any opinion of merit be fixed therein.

Tim. *What is the first meanes I must use, or I re-assume to personate a wounded Conscience?*

Phil. Constantly pray to God that in his due time he would speak peace unto thee.

Tim. *My prayers are better omitted then performed: They are so weak they will but bring the greater punishment upon me, and involve me within*

within the * Prophets *curse, to those* that doe the worke of the Lord negligently. * Jer. 48. 10.

Phil. Prayers negligently performed draw a curse, but not prayers weakly performed. The former is when one can doe better, and will not; the latter, is, when one would doe better, but alas, he cannot: And such failings as they are his sinnes, so they are his sorrows also: pray therefore faintly, that thou maist pray fervently; pray weakly, that thou mayest pray strongly.

Tim. *But in the Law they were forbidden to offer to God any* lame * sacrifice, *and such are my prayers.* * Deut. 15.21.

Phil. 1. Observe a great difference, betwixt the materiall *Sacrifice* under the *Law*, and spirituall Sacrifices (*the calves of the lips*) under the Gospell. The former were to be free from all blemish,

because they did typifie and resemble *Christ* himselfe: The latter (not figuratively representing *Christ*, but heartily presented unto him) must be as good as may be gotten; though many imperfections will cleave to our best performances, which by Gods mercy are forgiven. 2. Know that that in *Scripture* is accounted lame, which is counterfeit, and dissembling, (in which sense * Hypocrites are properly called halters) and therefore if thy prayer though never so weake, be found, and sincere, it is acceptable with God.

* 1 King. 18. 21.

Tim. *What other counsell doe you prescribe me?*

Phil. Be diligent in reading the Word of God, wherein all comfort is contained; say not that thou art dull-witted and indisposed to read, but remember how travellers must eat against their

their stomack; their journey will digest it: and though their Palate finde no pleasure for the present, their whole body will feele strength for the future. Thou hast a great journey to go, a *wounded conscience* is farre to travell to find comfort, (and though weary, shall be welcome at his journeys end) and therefore must feed on Gods word, even against his own dull disposition, and shall afterwards reap benefit thereby

Tim. *Proceed in your appointing of wholsome dyet for my* wounded conscience *to observe.*

Phil. Avoid *solitarinesse*, and associate thy selfe with *pious* and *godly company*: O the blessed fruits thereof! Such as want skill or boldnesse to begin or set a *Psalme*, may competently follow *tune* in consort with others: Many houses in *London*

have so weak wals, and are of so slight and slender building, that were they set alone in the fields, probably they would not stand an houre, which now ranged in *streets* receive support, in themselves, and mutually return it to others: So mayst thou in good society, not only be reserved from much mischiefe, but also be strengthened and confirmed in many godly exercises, which solely thou couldest not perform.

Tim. *What else must I doe?*

Phil. Be industrious in thy calling; I presse this the more, because some erroneously conceive that a *wounded conscience* cancels all *Indentures* of *service*, and gives them (during their affliction) a dispensation to be idle. The inhabitants of the *Bishoprick* of * *Durham* pleaded a priviledge, that King *Edward the first*,

* *Cambd. Brit. in Durham.*

firſt had no power, although on neceſſary occaſion, to *preſſe* them to goe out of the *Country*, becauſe forſooth, they termed themſelves *Haly-worke-folke*, only to be uſed in defending the holy *Shrine* of S. *Cuthbert*. Let none in like manner pretend, that (during the *agony* of a *wounded conſcience*) they are to have no other imployment, then to ſit moping to brood their Melancholly, or elſe only to attend their devotions; whereas a good way to divert or aſſwage their pain within, is to take paines without in their vocation. I am confident, that happy minute which ſhall put a period to thy miſery, ſhall not finde thee idle, but employed, as ever ſome ſecret good is accrewing to ſuch, who are diligent in their calling.

Tim. *But though* wounded

consciences *are not to be freed from all worke, are they not to be favoured in their worke?*

Phil. Yes verily. Here let me be the Advocate to such Parents and Masters, who have Sonnes, Servants, or others under their authority afflicted with *wounded Consciences*, O, doe not with the Ægyptian task-masters, exact of them the full tale of their bricke, *O spare a little till they have recovered some strength.* Unreasonable that maimed men, should passe on equall duty with such Souldiers as are sound.

Tim. *How must I dispose my self on the Lords day?*

Phil. Avoid all servile work, and expend it only in such actions, as tend to the sanctifying thereof. God the great *Landlord* of all *time* hath let out *six dayes* in the *weeke* to man to

farme

farme them; the *Seventh day* he reserveth as *Demeanes* in his owne hand: if therefore we would have quiet possession, and comfortable use of what God hath *leased* out to us, let us not incroach on his *Demeanes*. Some *Popish* * people make a superstitious *Almanack* of the *Sunday*, by the fairnesse or foulnesse thereof, guessing of the *weather* all the *weeke* after. But I dare boldly say, that from our well or ill spending of the *Lords Day*, a probable conjecture may be made, how the following *weeke* will be imployed. Yea I conceive we are bound (as matters now stand in *England*) to a stricter observation of the *Lords Day*, then ever before. That a time was due to Gods *Service*, no *Christian* in our Kingdome ever did deny: That the same was weekly dispersed in the

* *If it rains on Sunday before Messe, it will raine all weeke more or lesse.* Act Popish Mold rime.

Lords

Lords Day, Holy dayes, Wednesdayes, Fridayes, Saturdayes, some have earnestly maintained: Seeing therefore, all the last are generally neglected, the former must be more strictly observed, it being otherwise impious, that our devotion having a narrower channell, should also carry a shallower streame.

Tim. *What other means must I use for expedition of comfort to my* wounded Conscience?

Phil. Confesse that sinne or sinnes, which most perplexes thee, to some Godly *Minister*, who by absolution may pronounce, and apply, pardon unto thee.

2 Sam. 22. 13. Mat. 3. 6.

Tim. *This confession is but a* device *of* Divines, *thereby to skrue themselves into other mens secrets, so to mold, and manage them with more ease to their own profit.*

Phil.

Phil. God forbid they should have any other designe, but your safety, and therefore choose your Confessour, where you please to your owne contentment, so that you may finde ease, fetch it where you may, it is not our credit, but your cure we stand upon.

Tim. *But such confession hath bene counted rather a rack for* Sound, *then a remedy for* Wounded Consciences.

Phil. It proveth so, as abused in the *Romish Church*, requiring an enumeration of all mortall sinnes, therein supposing an error, that some sinnes are not mortall, and imposing an impossibility, that all can be reckoned up. Thus the *conscience* is tortured, because it can never tread firmly, feeling no bottome, being still uncertain of Confession, (and so of Absolution) whether or

or no he hath acknowledged all his sinnes; But where this ordinance is commended as convenient, not commanded as necessary, left free, not forced, in cases of extremity, soveraigne use may be made, and hath been found thereof, neither *Magistrate* nor *Minister* carrying the *Sword* or the *Keyes* in vaine.

Tim. *But, Sir, I expected some rare inventions from you, for curing* wounded consciences: *whereas all your receipts hitherto are old, stale, usuall, common, and ordinary; there is nothing new in any of them.*

Phil. I answer, First, if a *wounded conscience* had been a *new disease*, never hard of in Gods Word before this time, then perchance we must have been forced to finde out new remedies. But it is an *old malady*, and therefore *old Physick* is best applyed unto it. Secondly, the *Receipts* indeed

deed are old, because prescribed by him, whose the * *Ancient of dayes.* But the older the better, because warranted by experience to be effectuall. Gods ordinances are like the *cloathes* * of the *Children of Israel*, during our wandring in the wildernesse of this world, they never wax old, so as to have their vertue in operation abated or decayed. Thirdly, whereas you call them *common*; would to God they were so, and as generally practiced, as they are usually prescribed. Lastly, know we meddle not with *curious heads*, which are pleased with new-fangled rarities, but with *wounded consciences*, who love solid comfort. Suppose our Receipts ordinary and obvious; If * *Naaman* counts the cure too cheap and easie, none will pitty him if still he be pained with his leprosie.

* Dan 7. 9.

* Deu. 29. 5.

* 2 Kings 5. 12.

Tim.

Tim. *But your receipts are too*
loose and large, not fitted and appro-
priated to my malady alone. For all
these, Pray, reade, keep good
company, be diligent in thy ca-
ling, observe the Sabbath, con-
fesse thy sinnes, &c. *may as well*
be prescribed to one guilty of pre-
sumption, as to mee ready to de-
spaire.

Phil. It doth not follow, that
our physick is not proper for one,
because it may be profitable for
both.

Tim. *But Despaire and Pre-*
sumption being contrary diseases
flowing from contrary causes must
have contrary cures.

Phil. Though they flow im-
mediatly from contrary cau-
ses, yet originally from the
common fountaine of naturall
corruption; And therefore such
meanes as I have propounded,
tending towards the mortifying
of

of our corrupt nature, may generally, though not equally be usefull to humble the presuming, and comfort the despairing; But to cut off cavils in the next Dialogue, wee'l come closely to peculiar counsels unto thee.

XIII. Dialogue.

Foure wholsome Counsels, for a wounded Conscience *to practice.*

Tim. *Performe your promise, which is the first counsell you commend unto me?*

Phil. Take heed of ever renouncing thy *filiall interest* in *God*, though thy sinnes deserve that he should disclaime his *Internall relation* to thee. The *Prodigall* * returning to his *Father*

*Luk. 15. 21.

thee did not say, *I am not thy sonne*, but, *I am no more worthy to be called thy sonne*. Beware of bastardizing thy selfe, being as much as Satan desires, and more then he hopes to obtaine. Otherwise thy *folly* would give him more then his *fury* could get.

Tim. *I conceive this a needfull caution.*

Phil. It will appeare so if we consider, what the * Apostle saith, that we *wrestle with principalities and powers*. Now *wrestlers* in the *Olympian games* were *naked*, and anointed with oyle to make them slick; and glibbery, so to afford no hold fast to such as strove with them. Let us not gratifie the Devill with this advantage against our selves, at any time to disclaime our *Sonne-ship* in God: If the Devill catcheth us at this lock, he will throw us flat, and hazard the breaking

* Ephes. 6. 12.

of our necks with finall despair. Oh no! Still keep this point; a *Prodigall sonne* I am, but a *sonne*, no *bastard*: A *lost sheepe*, but a *sheep*, no *goate*: An *unprofitable servant*, but *Gods servant*, and not absolute *slave to Sathan*.

Tim. *Proceed to your second counsell.*

Phil Give credit to what grave and godly persons conceive of thy condition, rather then what thy own fear, (an incompetent Judge) may suggest into thee. A *feared Conscience* thinks better of it selfe, a *wounded* worse, then it ought: The former may account all sinne a sport, the latter all sport a sin: Melancholy men, when sick, are ready to conceit any cold to be the *cough* of the *Lungs*, and an ordinary *Pustle*, no lesse then the *plague sore*. So *wounded consciences* conceive sinnes of *infirmity* to be

of *presumption*, sins of *ignorance*, to be of *knowledge*, apprehending their case more dangerous then it is indeed.

Tim. *But it seemeth unreasonable that I should rather trust anothers saying, then my own sense of my selfe.*

Phil. Every man is best judge of his *owne selfe*, if he be his *owne selfe*, but during the swound of a *wounded conscience*, I deny thee to be come to *thy owne selfe*: whilst thine eyes are blubbering, and a teare hangs before thy sight, thou canst not see things clearely and truly, because looking through a double *medium* of aire and water; so whilst this cloud of *pensiveneſſe* is pendent before the eyes of thy soule, thy estate is erroneously represented unto thee.

Tim. *What is your third consell?*

Phil.

Phil. In thy agony of a *troubled conscience* alwayes look upwards unto a gracious God to keep thy soule steady, for looking downward on thy selfe, thou shalt finde nothing but what will encrease thy feare, infinite sinnes, good deeds few, and imperfect: It is not thy Faith, but Gods faithfulnesse thou must relie upon; casting thine eyes downwards on thy selfe to behold the great distance betwixt what thou deservest, and what thou desirest, is enough to make thee giddy, stagger and reel into despaire: Ever therefore *Lift up thine eyes unto the hils, from whence commeth thy help*, never viewing the deep Dale of thy own unworthynesse, but to abate thy pride when tempted to presumption. *Psal. 121. 1.*

Tim. *Sir, your fourth and last counsell.*

Phil. Be not disheartned as if

comfort would not come at all, because it comes not all at once, but patiently attend Gods leisure: they are not styled the swift, but the *Sure mercies of David:* And the same Prophet saith, * *The glory of the Lord shall be thy Rereward,* this we know comes up last to secure and make good all the rest: Be assured, where *grace* patiently leads the *Front*, *glory* at last will be in the *Reare*. Remember the prodigious patience of *Eliahs* servant.

*Isa. 55. 3. and 58 8.

*1 King. 18.43.

Tim. *Wherein was it remarkable?*

Phil. In obedience to his master: He went severall times to the *Sea*, it is tedious for me to tell what was not troublesome for him to doe; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. times sent down steepe *Carmel*, with danger, and up it again with difficulty, and all to bring newes of nothing, till his last journey,

journey, which made recompence for all the rest, with the tydings of a cloud arising. So thy thirsty soule, long parched with drowth for want of comfort, though late, at last, shall be plentifully refreshed with the dew of consolation.

Tim. *I shall be happy if I finde it so.*

Phil. Consider the causes why a broken Leg is incureable in a Horse, and easily cureable in a man: The Horse is incapable of counsell to submit himselfe to the *Farrier*, and therefore in case his Leg be set, he flings, flounces, and flies out, unjoynting it again by his mis-imployed mettle, counting all binding to be shackles and fetters unto him; whereas a man willingly resigneth himselfe to bee ordered by the *Chyrurgeon*, preferring rather to be a prisoner for some dayes,

then a Cripple all his life. *Bee not*
* Ps 32. 6. *like a* * *Horse or Mule, which have no understanding*; but *let patience have its perfect work* in thee. When
* Jam. 1. 3. God goeth about *to bind up the* * *broken hearted*, tarry his time,
Is. 61. 1. though ease come not at an instant, yea though it be painfull for the present, in due time thou shalt certainly receive comfort.

XIV. Dialogue.

Comfortable Meditations for wounded Consciences *to muse upon.*

Tim. *Furnish mee I pray with some comfortable* meditations, *whereon I may busie and imploy my soule when alone.*

Phil. First consider that our *Saviour* had not only a notio-

nall,

all, but an experimentall and meritorious knowledge of the paines of a *wounded conscience, when hanging on the Crosse*: If *Paul conceived himselfe happy* being to answer for himselfe, before King *Agrippa, especially because he knew him to be expert in all the customes and questions of the Jewes*; How much more just cause hath thy *wounded conscience* of comfort and joy, being in thy prayers to plead before *Christ* himselfe, who hath felt thy pain, and deserved that in due time by his stripes thou shouldst be healed?

*Act. 29 2.

Tim. *Proceed I pray in this comfortable subject,*

Phil. Secondly, consider that herein, like *Eliah*, thou needest not complaine that thou art left alone, seeing the best of Gods Saints, in all ages have smarted in the same kind; instance in *David*: indeed sometimes he boasteth

*Psa. 23. 2. how *he lay in green * pastures, and was led by still waters*; But after he bemoaneth that *he sinks in* *Psa. 69. 2 * *deepe mire, where there was no standing.* What is become of those *greene pastures*? Parched up with the *drouth*. Where are those *still waters*? Troubled with the tempest of affliction. The same *David* compareth himselfe to an * *Owle*, and in the next *Psalme* resembleth himselfe to an *Eagle*. Doe two *fowles* flie of more different kind? The one the *Scorne*, the other the *Soveraigne*; the one the *slowest*, the other the *swiftest*; the one the most *sharp sighted*, the other the most dimme-eyed of all *Birds*. Wonder not then, to find in thy selfe sudden, and strange alterations. It fared thus with all Gods servants, in their agonies of temptation, and be confident thereof, though

*Compare Psa. 102. 6. with Psa. 102. 5.

now

now run aground, with greife, in due time thou shalt be all a floate with comfort.

Tim. *I am loath to interrupt you in so welcome a discourse.*

Phil. Thirdly, consider, that thou hast had, though not grace enough to cure thee, yet enough to keep thee, and conclude that he, whose goodnesse hath so long held thy head above water from drowning, will at last bring thy whole body safely to the shoare. The *Wife* of *Manoah*, had more *faith* then her *husband*, and thus *shee* reasoned; * *If the Lord were pleased to kill us hee would not have received a burnt, and a meat offering at our hands.* Thou mayst argue in like manner: If God had intended finally to forsake me, he would never so often have heard and accepted my prayers, in such measure as to vouchsafe unto

* Judge. 13. 23.

me,

me, though not full deliverance *from*, free preservation in my affliction. Know *God hath done great things for thee already*, and thou mayst conclude from his grace of supportation hitherto, grace of ease, and relaxation hereafter.

Tim. *It is pitty to disturb you, proceed.*

Phil. Fourthly, consider, that besides the private stock of thy owne, thou tradest on the publick store of all good mens prayers, put up to heaven for thee. What a mixture of *Languages* met in *Hierusalem* at *Pentecost*, * *Parthians*, *Mede*, and *Elamites*, &c. But conceive to thy comfort, what a medley of prayers, in severall tongues daily center themselves in Gods eares in thy behalfe, *English*, *Scotch*, *Irish*, *French*, *Dutch*, &c. insomuch, that perchance thou

* Act. 2.

dost

dost not understand one syllable of their prayers, by whom thou mayst reap benefit.

Tim. *Is it not requisite to inttitle mee to the profit of other mens prayers, that I particularly know their persons which pray for me?*

Phil. Not at all, no more then it is needfull that the *eye* or *face* must see the backward parts, which is difficult, or the inward parts of the body, which is impossible; without which sight, by sympathie they serve one another. And such is the correspondency by prayers, betwixt the mysticall members of Christs body, corporally unseen one by another.

Tim. *Proceed to a fit Meditation.*

Phil. Consider there be five kinds of *Consciences* on foot in the world: First, an *ignorant conscience*, which neither sees nor

saith

saith any thing, neither beholds the sinnes in a soule, nor reproves them. Secondly, the *flattering conscience*, whose speech is worse then silence it selfe, which though seeing sin, soothes men in the committing thereof. Thirdly, the *seared conscience*, which hath neither sight, speech, nor sense, in men that are * *past feeling*. Fourthly, a *wounded conscience*, frighted with sinne. The last, and best, is a *quiet*, and *clear conscience*, pacified in *Christ Jesus*. Of these the fourth is thy case, incomparably better then the three former, so that a wise man would not take a world to change with them. Yea a *wounded conscience* is rather painfull then sinful, an affliction no offence, and is in the ready way, at the next remove, to be turned into a *quiet conscience*.

* Ephe. 4 19.

Tim. *I hearken unto you with*

at-

attention and comfort.

Phil. Lastly, consider the good effects of a wounded conscience, privative for the present, and positive for the future. First, primative, this heavinesse of thy heart (for the time being) is a bridle to thy soule, keeping it from many sinnes it would otherwise commit. Thou that now sittest sad in thy shop, or walkest pensive in thy parlour, or standest sighing in thy chamber, or lyest sobbing on thy bed, mightest perchance at the same time be drunk, or wanton, or worse, if not restrained by this affliction. God saith in his Prophet to *Judah*, * *I will hedge thy way with thornes*, namely, to keep *Judah* from committing *spirituall fornication*. It is confest that a *wounded conscience*, for the time, is a *hedge of thornes*, (as the messenger of *Satan*, sent to buffet S. *Paul*,

* Hos. 2. 6.

*2 Cor. 12.7. *Paul*, is termed a **thorne in the flesh*. But this *thornie* fence keeps our wild spirits in the true way, which otherwise would be stragling: and it is better to be held in the right road with *briars* and *brambles*, then to wonder on beds of *roses*, in a wrong path, which leadeth to destruction.

Tim. *What are the positive benefits of a* wounded conscience?

Phil. Thereby the graces in thy soule will be proved, approved, improved. Oh how cleare will thy *Sun Shine* be, when this *cloud* is blowne over? And here I can hardly hold from envying thy happinesse hereafter. O that I might have thy future *Crowne*, without thy present *Crosse*; thy *Triumphs*, without thy *Tryall*; thy *Conquest*, without thy *Combat*! But I recall my wish, as impossible, seeing *what God hath joyned together, no man can put asun-*

der.

der. Theſe things are ſo twiſted together, I muſt have both or neither.

XV. Dialogue.

That is not alwayes the greateſt ſinne whereof a man is guilty, wherewith his conſcience *is moſt pained for the preſent.*

Tim. *IS that the greateſt ſin in a mans ſoule, wherewith his* wounded conſcience, *in the agony thereof is moſt perplexed?*

Phil. It is ſo commonly, but not conſtantly. Commonly indeed, that ſin moſt paineth and pincheth him, which commands as principall in his ſoule.

Tim. *Have all mens hearts ſome* paramount *ſinne, which rules,*

as

as Soveraigne over all the rest?

Phil. Most have. Yet as all Countries are not *Monarchies*, governed by *Kings*, but some by *free-States*, where many together have equall power; so it is possible (though rare) that one man may have two, three, or more sinnes, which joyntly domineer in his heart, without any discernable superiority betwixt them.

Tim. *Which are the sinnes that most generally wound and afflict a man, when his* Conscience *is terrified?*

Phil. No generall rule can exactly be given herein, Sometimes that sin, in acting whereof, he tooke most delight, it being just, that the sweetnesse of his corporall pleasure, should be sauced with more spirituall sadnesse. Sometimes that sinne which

which (though not the fouleſt) is the frequenteſt in him. Thus his idle words may perplex him more, then his oathes or perjury it ſelfe. Sometimes that ſin (not which is moſt odious before God, but) moſt ſcandalous before men, doth moſt afflict him, becauſe drawing greateſt diſgrace upon his perſon and profeſſion. Sometimes that ſin which he laſt committed, becauſe all the circumſtances thereof are ſtill firme and freſh in his memory. Sometimes that ſin, which (though long ſince by him committed) he hath heard very lately powerfully reproved; and no wonder, if an old gall new rubbed over, ſmart the moſt. Sometimes that ſinne which formerly he moſt ſlighted and neglected, as ſo inconſiderably ſmall, that it was unworthy of any ſorrow for it, and

yet now it may prove the sharpest sting in his conscience.

Tim. *May not one who is guilty of very great sinnes, sometimes have his conscience much troubled onely for a small one*

Phil. Yes verily: Country Patients often complaine, not of the disease which is most dangerous, but most conspicuous. Yea sometimes they are more troubled with the symptome of a disease (suppose an ill colour, bad breath, weak stomack) then with the disease it selfe. So in the soule, the conscience oft-times is most wounded, not with that offence which is, but appears most; and a sinne incomparably small to others, whereof the party is guilty, may most molest for the present, and that for three reasons.

Tim. *Reckon them in order.*

Phil. First, that God may shew

ſhew in him, that as ſinnes are like the ſands in number, ſo they are farre above them in heavineſſe, whereof the leaſt crum taken aſunder, and laid on the conſcience, by Gods hand, in full weight thereof, is enough to drive it to deſpaire.

Tim. *What is the ſecond reaſon?*

Phil. To manifeſt Gods juſtice, that thoſe ſhould be choaked with a *gnat-ſinne*, who have ſwallowed many *Camel-ſinnes*, without the leaſt regreat. Thus ſome may be terrified for not *faſting* on *Fryday*, becauſe indeed they have been *drunk* on *Sunday*: They may be perplexed for their wanton dreames, when ſleeping, becauſe they were never truly humbled for their wicked deeds, when waking. Yea thoſe who never feared *Babylon the Great*, may be frighted with

little Zeal; I meane, such as have been faulty in flat superstition, may be tortured for committing, or omitting a thing, in its own nature, indifferent.

Tim. *What is the third Reason?*

Phil. That this paine for a lesser sinne may occasion his serious scrutiny, into greater offences. Any paltry *curre* may serve to start and put up the *game* out of the bushes, whilst fiercer, and fleeter *Hounds* are behind to course and catch it. God doth make use of a smaller sinne, to raise and rouze the *conscience* out of security, and *to put it up*, as we say, to be *chased*, by the Reserve of far greater offences, *lurking behind* in the soule, unseen, and unsorrowed for.

Tim. *May not the* conscience *bee troubled at that, which in very deed*

deed is no ſinne at all, nor hath truly ſo much, as but the appearance of evill in it?

Phil. It may. Through the errour of the underſtanding ſuch a miſtake may follow in the conſcience.

Tim. *What is to be done in ſuch caſe?*

Phil. The parties judgement *muſt be rectified*, before his conſcience *can be pacified*. Then is it the wiſeſt way to perſwade him to lay the *Axe* of repentance. to that *Root* of corruption in his heart. When reall ſinnes in his ſoule are felled by unfained ſorrow, cauſeleſſe ſcruples will fall of themſelves. Till that *root* be cut downe, not onely the leaſt *bough*, and *branch* of that tree, but the ſmalleſt *ſprig*, *twig*, and *leafe* thereof, yea the very empty ſhadow of *leafe* (miſtaken for a ſinne, and created a

fault by the jealousie of a mis-informed judgement) is sufficient intollerably to torture a *wounded conscience.*

XVI. Dialogue

Obstructions hindring the speedy flowing of comfort into a troubled soule.

Tim. *How commeth it to passe, that comfort is so long a comming to some* wounded consciences?

Phil. It proceeds from severall causes, either from God, not yet pleased to give it; or the Patient, not yet prepared to receive it; or the Minister, not well fitted to deliver it.

Tim. *How from God not yet pleased to give it?*

Phil. His time to bestow consolatio

ſolation is not yet come: now no plummets of the heavieſt humane importunity can ſo weigh downe Gods *Clock of Time*, *as* to make it ſtrike one minute *before his houre bee come.* Till then his *Mother* her ſelfe could not prevaile with * *Chriſt* to work a *Miracle*, and turn *water* into *wine:* and till that minute appointed approach, God will not, in a *wounded conſcience*, convert the *water of affliction*, into that *wine of comfort*, which *maketh glad the heart of the ſoule.* * Ioh. 2. 4.

Tim. *How may the hindrance be in the Patient himſelfe?*

Phil. He may as yet not be ſufficiently humbled, or elſe God perchance in his providence fore-ſeeth, that as the *prodigall child*, when he had received his *portion*, riotouſly miſſpent it; ſo this *ſick ſoule*, if comfort were imparted unto him,

would prove an unthrift and ill husband upon it, would loose and lavish it. God therefore conceiveth it most for his glory, and the others good, to keep the comfort still in his owne hand, till the *wounded conscience* get more wisdome to manage and employ it.

Tim. *May not the* sick mans *too meane opinion of the Minister, be a cause why hee reaps no more comfort by his counsell?*

Phil. It may. Perchance, the sicke man hath formerly slighted and neglected that Minister, and God will not now make him the instrument for his comfort, who before had beene the obj & of his contempt. But on the other side, we must also know that perchance the parties over-high opinion of the Ministers parts, piety, and corporall presence, (as if he cured where he came,

and

and carryed eaſe with him) may hinder the operation of his advice. For God growes jealous of ſo ſuſpicious an inſtrument who probably may be miſtaken for the principall. Whereas a meaner man, of whoſe ſpiritualneſſe the patient hath not ſo high carnall conceipts, may prove more effectuall in comforting, becauſe not within the compaſſe of ſuſpi ion to eclipſe God of his glory.

Tim. *How may the obſtructions be in th Miniſter himſelfe?*

Phil. If he comes unprepared by prayer, or poſſeſſed with pri e, or unskilfull in what he undertakes; wherefore in ſuch c ſes a Min ſter may doe well to reflect on himſelfe, (as the * *Diſciples* did when they could not caſt out the Devill) and to call his heart to account, what may be the cauſe thereof; par-

*Mat. 17. 19.

ticularly

ticularly whether ſome unrepented-for ſinne in himſelf, hath not hindred the effects of his councels in others.

Tim. *However you would not have him wholly diſheartned, with his ill ſucceſſe.*

Phil. O no; but let him comfort himſelf with theſe conſiderations. Firſt, that though the Patient gets no benefit by him, he may gain experience by the Patient, thereby being enabled more effectually to proceede, with ſome other in the ſame diſeaſe. Secondly, though the ſick man refuſeth comfort for the preſent, yet what doth not ſink on a ſudden, may ſoake in by degrees, and may prove profitable afterwards. Thirdly, his unſucceeding paines may notwithſtanding facilitate comfort for another to worke in the ſame body, as *Solomon* built a

Temple

Temple with moſt materials formerly provided, and brought thither by *David*. Laſtly, grant his paines altogether loſt on the *wounded Conſcience*, yet his * *Labour is not in vaine in the Lord*, who without reſpect to the event will reward his endeavours. * 1 Cor. 15. 58.

Tim. *But what if this Miniſter hath beene the meanes to caſt this ſick man downe and now cannot comfort him againe?*

Phil. In ſuch a caſe, he muſt make this ſad accident the more matter for his humiliation, but not for his dejection. Beſides, he is bound, both in Honour and Honeſty, Civility and Chriſtianity, to procure what he cannot performe, calling in the advice of others more able to aſſiſt him, not conceiving out of pride or envie, that the diſcreet craving of the helpe

helpe of others, is a diſgraceful confeſſing of his owne weakneſſe; like thoſe malitious *Mid-wives*, who had rather that the woman in travaile ſhould miſcarry, then be ſafely delivered by the hand of another, more skilfull then themſelves.

XVII. Dialogue.

What is to be conceived of their finall eſtate who die in a wounded Conſcience *without any viſible comfort.*

Tim. *WHat thinke you of ſuch, who yeeld up their ghoſt in the agony of an* afflicted *ſpirit, without receiving the leaſt ſenſible degree of comfort?*

Phil. Let me be your remembrancer to call or keep in your mind, what I ſaid before, that our

our diſcourſe onely concerneth the Children of God: This notion renued I anſwer. It is poſſible that the ſick ſoule may receive ſecret ſolace, though the ſtanders by doe not perceive it. We know how inſenſibly Satan may ſpirt and inject Deſpaire into a heart, and ſhall we not allow the Lord of heaven to be more dextrous and active with his Antidotes, then the devill is with his Poyſons?

Tim. *Surely if he had any ſuch comfort, he would ſhew it by words, ſignes, or ſome way, were it onely but to comfort his ſad kindred, and content ſuch ſorrowfull friends which ſurvive him; Were there any hidden fire of conſolation kindled in his heart, it would ſparkle in his looks and geſtures, eſpecially ſeeing no obligation of ſecrecie is impoſed on him, as on the blind man, when healed, to tell none thereof.* * Mar. 8. 26.

Phil.

Phil. It may be he cannot discover the comfort he hath received, and that for two reasons: First, because it comes so late, when he lyeth in the *Merches* of life and death, being so weak, that he can neither speak, nor make signes with *Zechariah*, being at that very instant, *when the silver cord is ready to be loosed, and the golden bowle to bee broken, and the pitcher to be broken at the fountaine, and the wheele to be broken at the cisterne.*

Tim. *What may be the other reason?*

Phil. Because the Comfort it selfe may be incommunicable in its owne nature, which the party can take, and not tell; enjoy, and not expresse; receive and not impart: As by the assistance of Gods Spirit, he sent up * *groanes which cannot be uttered:* so the same may from God

*Rom. 8 26.

be

be returned with comfort, which cannot be uttered; and as he had many inviſible and privy pangs, concealed from the cognizance of others, ſo may God give him ſecret comfort, known unto himſelf alone, without any other mens ſharing in the notice thereof. * *The heart knoweth his owne bitterneſſe, and a ſtranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.* So that his comfort may be compared to the *new name* given to Gods ſervants, * *which no man knoweth, ſave he that receiveth it.*

* Pro. 14 10.

* Rev. 2. 17.

Tim. *All this proceeds on what is poſſible or probable, but amounts to no certainty.*

Phil. Well then, ſuppoſe the worſt, this is moſt ſure, though he die without taſting of any comfort here, he may inſtantly partake of everlaſting joyes hereafter. Surely many a deſpairing ſoule groaning out his laſt

last breath, with fear and thought to sinke down to hell, hath presently beene countermanded by Gods goodnesse to eternall happinesse.

Tim. *What you say herein, no man alive can confirme or confute, as being knowne to God alone, and the soul of the party. Only I must confesse that you have charity on your side.*

Phil. I have more then charity, namely, Gods plain and positive Promise, * *Blessed are such as mourne, for they shall bee comforted.* Now though the particular time, *when*, be not expressed, yet the latest *date* that can be allowed, must be in the world to come, where such mourners, who have not felt God in his comfort here, shall see him in his glory in Heaven.

* Mat. 5. 4

Tim. *But some who have led pious and godly lives, have departed,*

ted, *pronouncing the sentence of condemnation upon themselves, having one foot already in hell by their owne confession.*

Phil. Such confessions are of no validity, wherein their feare *beares false witnesse* against their faith. The sinfulnesse of the whole bloath of their life must not be thought the worse of for a little coutse *list* at the last. And also their finall estate is not to be construed by what was dark, doubtfull and desperate at their deaths, but must be expounded by what was plaine, cleare, and comfortable, in their lives.

Tim. You then are confident, that a holy life, must have a happy death.

Phil. Most confident. The *Logicians* hold, that, although from false premises a true conclusion may sometimes follow yet from true propositions, nothing

but a * truth can be thence inferred, so though sometimes a bad life may be attended with a good death, (namely, by reason of repentance, though slow, sincere, though late, yet unfaigned, being seasonably interposed) but where a godly and gracious life hath gone before, there a good death must of necessity follow; which, though sometimes dolefull (for want of apparent comfort) to their surviving friends, can never be dangerous to the party deceased. Remember what St. *Paul* saith, * *Our life is hid with Christ in God.*

* *Ex veris possum, nil nisi vera sequi.*

* Col. 3. 3.

Tim. *What makes that place to your purpose?*

Phil Exceeding much. Five cordiall observations are couched therein. First, that God sets a high price, and valuation on the soules of his servants, in that

that he is pleased to *hide* them: None will *hide* toyes, and trifles, but what is counted a treasure. Secondly, the word *hide*, as a relative importeth, that some seeke after our soules, being none other then *Sathan* himselfe, *that roaring Lyon, who goes about* SEEKING, *whom hee may devour*: But the best is, let him *seeke*, and *seeke*, and *seeke*, till his malice be weary, (if that be possible) we cannot be hurt by him, whilst we are *hid in God*. Thirdly, grant *Sathan* finde us there, he cannot fetch us thence: *Our soules are bound in the bundle of life, with the Lord our God*. So that, be it spoken with reverence, God first must bee stormed with force or fraud, before the soule of a Saint-sinner, *hid* in him, can be surprized. Fourthly, we see the reason, why so many are at a losse, in the agony

* 1 Pet. 5. 8.

of a *wounded conscience*, concerning their spiritnall estate. For they looke for their life in a wrong place, namely to finde it in their owne piety, purity, and inherent righteousnesse. But though they seeke, and search, and dig, and dive never so deep, all in vaine. For though *Adams* life was hid in himselfe, and he intrusted with the keeping his owne integrity, yet, since Christs comming, all the originall evidences of our salvation are kept in a higher office, namely, *hidden in God himselfe*. Lastly, as our *English Proverb* saith, *hee that hath him can finde*; so God (to whom *belongs the* * *issues from death*) can infallibly finde out that soule that is hidden in him, though it may seeme, when dying, even to labour to lose it selfe in a fit of despaire.

* Psa. 68. 20.

Tim. *It is pitty, but that* [illegible]

comfortable a doctrine should bee true.

Phil. It is most true. Surely as * *Joseph* and *Mary* conceived, that they had lost *Christ* in a crowd, and sought him three dayes sorrowing, till at last they found him beyond their expectation, safe and sound, sitting in the Temple: So many pensive parents solicitous for the soules of their children, have even given them for gone, and lamented them lost (because dying without visible comfort) and yet, in due time, shall finde them to their joy and comfort, safely possessed of honour and happiness, in the *midst of the heavenly Temple, and Church Triumphant* in glory.

* Luk. 2. 48.

XVIII. Dialogue.

Of the different time and manner of the comming of comfort to such who are healed of a wounded conscience.

Tim. *How long may a servant of God lye under the burden of a* wounded conscience?

Phil. * *It is not for us to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.* God alone knowes whether their griefe shall be measured unto them, by houres, or dayes, or weeks, or moneths, or many yeeres.

* Act. 1. 7.

Tim. *How then is it that Saint* Paul *saith, that* God will give us the * issue with the temptation, *if one may long be visited with this malady?*

* 1 Cor. 10. 13.

Phil. The Apostle is not so to be

be understood, as if the *temptation* and *issue* were *twins*, both borne at the same instant; for then no affliction could last long, but must be ended as soone as it is begun; whereas we * read how *Æneas truly pious*, was bedrid of the *Palsie* 8. yeeres; the *woman* diseased with a * *bloody issue* 12. yeeres; another *woman bowed by infirmity* * 18. yeeres; and he man * *lame* 38. yeeres at the *poole of Bethesda*.

* Act. 9. 33.
* Mat. 9. 2.
* Luke. 13. 11.
* Ioh. 5. 5.

Tim. *What then is the meaning of the Apostle?*

Phil. God will give the issue with the temptation, that is, the *temptation* and the *issue* bear both the same date in Gods decreeing them, though not in his applying them: At the same time, wherein he resolved his servants shall be tempted, he also concluded of the means and manner, how the same persons should infallibly be

delivered. Or thus: *God will give the issue with the temptation*, that is, as certainly, though not as suddenly. Though they goe not *abreast*, yet they are joyned successively, like two links in a chaine, where one endeth, the other doth begin. Besides, there is a two-fold *issue*; one, through a *temptation*; another, out of a *temptation*. The former is but mediate, not finall; an *issue*, to an *issue*, onely supporting the person, tempted for the present, and preserving him for a future full deliverance. Understand the *Apostle* thus, and the *issue* is alwayes both given and applyed to Gods children, with the *temptation*, though the temptation may last long after, before fully removed.

Tim. *I perceive then, that in some, a* wounded conscience *may continue many yeares.*

Phil.

Phil. So it may. I read of a poore *widdow*, in the Land of *Limburgh*, who had nine children, and for 13. yeares together, was miserably afflicted in mind, only because she had attended the dressing and feeding of her little ones, before going to *Masse*. At last it pleased God, to sanctifie the endeavours of *Franciscus Junius*, that learned godly *Divine*, that upon true information of her judgement, she was presently and perfectly comforted.

*Melchior Adamus in vita Theologorum Extororum pag. 198.

Tim. *Doth God give ease to all in such manner on a sudden?*

Phil. O no: Some receive comfort all in a lump, and in an instant they passe from *Midnight*, to bright day, without any dawning betwixt. Others receive consolation by degrees, which is not poured, but dropt into them by little and little.

Tim.

Tim. *Strange, that Gods dealing herein should be so different with his servants.*

Phil. It is to shew, that as in his proceedings there is *no* * *variableneſſe*, such as may import him mutable or impotent, so in the same there is very much variety, to prove the fulneſſe of his power, and freedom of his pleasure.

*Jam. 1. 17.

Tim. *Why doth not God give them consolation all at once?*

Phil. The more to employ their prayers, and exercise their patience. One may admire why *Boaz* did not give to *Ruth* a quantity of Corne more or lesse, so sending her home to her mother, but that rather he kept her still to gleane; but this was the reason, because that is the best charity, which so relieves anothers poverty, as still continues their industry; God in like manner,

*Ruth 2 8.

ner, will not give some consolation all at once, he will not spoil their (painfull but) pious profession of gleaning; still they must pray, and gather, and pray and gleane, here an eare there a handfull of comfort, which God scatters in favours unto them.

Tim. *What must the party doe when he perceives God and his comfort beginning to draw nigh unto him?*

Phil. As * *Martha*, when she heard that *Christ* was a comming staid not a minute at home, but went out of her house to meet him; So must a sick soule, when consolation is a comming, haste out of himselfe, and hie to entertain God with his thankfulnesse. The best way to make a *Homer* of comfort encrease to an *Ephah*, (which is * ten times as much) is to be heartily gratefull for what one hath already, that his store

* Joh. 11.20.

* Exo. 16 36.

store may be multiplyed: He shall never want more, who is thankfull for, and thrifty with a little: Whereas ingratitude doth not only stop the flowing of more mercy, but even spils what was formerly received.

XIX. Dialogue.

How such who are compleatly cured of a wounded conscience are to demeane themselves.

Tim. *Give me leave now to take upon me the person of one recovered out of a* wounded conscience,

Phil. In the first place, I must heartily congratulate thy happy condition, and must rejoyce at thy *uprising*, whom God hath raised from the bed of despaire: welcome *David* out of the *deepe*, *Daniel*

Daniel out of the *Lions Den*, *Jonah*, from the *Whales belly*: Welcome *Job* from the *Dunghill*, restored to health and wealth again.

Tim. *Yea, but when* Jobs brethren *came to visit him after his recovery, every one gave him a piece* of * money, and an eare-ring of gold: *But the* Present *I expect from you, let it be I pray some of your good counsell, for my future deportment.* * Job 42. 11.

Phil. I have need to come to thee, and comest thou to me? Faine would I be a *Paul*, sitting at the feet of such a *Gamaliel*, who hath been cured of a *wounded conscience*, in the height thereof: I would turn my *tongue into eares*, and listen attentively to what tidings he bringeth from Hell it selfe. Yea, I should bee worse then the brethren of *Dives*, If I should not believe one risen from the

the *dead*, for such in effect I conceive to be his condition.

Tim. *But waving these digressions, I pray proceed to give me good advice.*

Phil. First, thankfully owne God, thy principall restorer, and Comforter Paramount. Remember that of * *ten Lepers*, one onely returned to give thanks; which sheweth, that by nature, without grace over-swaying us, it is ten to one if we be thankfull. Omit not also thy thankfulnesse to good men, not onely to such, who have been the Architects of thy comfort, but even to those, who though they have built nothing, have borne burthens towards thy recovery.

* Luk. 17. 17.

Tim. *Goe on I pray in your good counsell.*

Phil. Associate thy selfe with men of afflicted minds, with whom thou mayst expend thy time;

time, to thine and their best advantage. O how excellently did *Paul* comply with *Aquila* and *Priscilla*! As their hearts agreed in the generall profession of Piety, so their hands met in the trade of *Tent-makers*, they abode and wrought together, being of the same occupation. Thus I count all *wounded consciences* of the same company, and may mutually reap comfort one by another. Onely here is the difference: they (poore soules) are still bound to their hard task and trade, whilst thou (happy man) hast thy *Indentures cancelled*, and being *free* of that *Profession*, art able to instruct others therein. *Act. 18 3.

Tim. *What instructions must I commend unto them?*

Phil. Even the same comfort, wherewith thou thy selfe was comforted of God: with *David* tell them * 2 Cor. 1. 4.

them *what God hath done for thy soule*, and with *Peter*, being strong *strengthen thy brethren: conceive thy selflike *Joseph*, therefore *sent before*, and *sold* into the *Aegypt* of a *wounded conscience*, (*where thy feet were hurt in the stocks the irons entered into thy soule*) that thou mightest provide *food* for the *famine* of others, and especially be a purveyor of comfort for those thy brethren, which afterwards shall follow thee downe into the same dolefull condition.

*Luke 22.32.

Tim. *What else must I doe for my afflicted brethren?*

Phil. Pray heartily to God in their behalfe. When *David* had prayed, *Psalm* 25. 2. *O my God I trust in thee, let mee not be ashamed*; In the next verse (as if conscious to himselfe, that his prayers were too restrictive, narrow, and nigardly) he enlargeth the bounds thereof, and builds them on a

broader

broader bottome; *yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed*: Let charity in thy devotions have *Rechoboth*, roome enough: beware of pent Petitions confined to thy private good, but extend them to all Gods servants, but especially all *wounded Consciences*.

Tim. *Must I not also pray for those servants of God, which hitherto have not been* wounded *in* Conscience?

Phil. Yes verily, that God would keep them from, or cure them in the exquisite torment thereof: Beggars when they crave an almes, constantly use one main motive, that the person of whom they beg may be preserved from that misery, whereof they themselves have had wofull experience: If they be blinde, they cry, *Master God blesse your eye sight*; if lame, *God blesse your limbs*; if undone by ca-

ſmall burning, *God bleſſe you and yours from Fire.* Chriſt, though his perſon be now glorifyed in heaven, yet he is ſtill ſubject by ſympathy of his Saints on earth, to hunger, nakednes, impriſonment, and a *Wounded Conſcience*, and ſo may ſtand in need of feeding, cloathing, viſiting, comforting, and curing: Now when thou prayeſt to Chriſt, for any favour, it is a good plea to urge, edge, and enforce thy requeſt withall, *Lord grant me ſuch or ſuch a grace, and never mayſt thou Lord, in thy myſticall members, never be tortured and tormented with the agony of a* wounded Conſcience, *in the deepeſt diſtreſſe thereof.*

Tim. *How muſt I behave my ſelf for the time to come?*

Phil. Walke humbly before God, and carefully avoid the ſmalleſt ſinne, alwayes remembring * Chriſts caution, *Behold*

* Joh. 5. 14.

thou

thou art made whole, ſinne no more, leſt a worſe thing come unto thee.

XX. Dialogue.

Whether one Cured of a wounded Conſcience, bee ſubject to a relapſe.

Tim. *May a man, once perfectly healed of a* wounded Conſcience, *and for ſome years in peaceable poſſeſſion of comfort, afterwards fall back into his former diſeaſe?*

Phil. Nothing appeares in Scripture or reaſon to the contrary, though examples of reall relapſes are very rare, becauſe Gods ſervants are carefull to avoid ſinne, the cauſe thereof, and being once burnt therewith, ever after dread the fire of a *wounded Conſcience.*

Tim. *Why call you it a relapse?*

Phil. To distinguish it from those *relapses* more usuall and obvious, whereby such, who have snatcht comfort, before God gave it them, on serious consideration, that they had usurped that, to which they had no right, fall back again into the former pit of despaire: This is improperly termed a relapse, as not being a renewing, but a continuing of their former malady, from which, though seemingly, they were never soundly recovered.

Tim. *Is there any intimation in Scripture of the possibility of such a reall relapse in Gods servants?*

Phil. There is, when *David* saith, Psal. 85.8. *I will hear what God the Lord will speake, for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints, but let them not turn again to folly:* this importeth, that

that if his *Saints turn again to folly*, which by wofull experience, wee finde too frequently done, God may change his *Voyce*, and turn his peace formerly spoken, into a warlike defiance to their conscience.

Tim. *But this me-thinks is a diminution to the majesty of God, that a man, once compleatly cured of a wounded conscience, should again be pained therewith: Let* Mountebanks *palliat cures break out again, being never soundly, but superficially healed:* Hee that is all in all, *never doth his work by* halves, *so that it shall be undone afterward.*

Phil It is not the same individuall wound in number, but the same in kinde, and perchance a deeper in degree: Nor is it any ignorance, or falshood in the Surgeon, but folly, and fury in the Patient, who by committing fresh sins, causeth a new pain in the old place.

Tim. *In such relapses men are onely troubled for such sins, which they have run on score since their last recovery from a wounded conscience.*

Phil. Not those alone, but all the sinnes which they have committed, both before; and since their conversion, may be started up afresh in their mindes and memories, and anguish and perplex them, with the guiltinesse thereof.

Tim. *But those sinnes were formerly fully forgiven, and the pardon thereof solemnly sealed, and assured unto them, and can the guilt of the same recoile againe upon their consciences?*

Phil. I will not dispute what God may doe in the strictnes of his justice: Such Scales, though still standing firm & fast in themselves, may notwithstanding breake off, and flye open in the feeling of the sick soule: He will

be

be ready to conceive with himself, that as *Shimei, though once forgiven his rayling on *David*, was afterwards executed for the same offence, though upon his committing of a new transgression, following his servants to *Gath*, against the flat command of the King: So God, upon his committing of new trespasses, may justly take occasion to punish all former offences; yea in his apprehensions, the very foundation of his faith may bee shaken, all his former title to heaven brought into question, and he tormented with the consideration that he was never a true childe of God.

*2 King 2.44.

Tim. *What remedies doe you commend to such soules in relapses?*

Phil. Even the selfe-same receipts which I first prescribed to *wounded Consciences*, the very same Promises, Precepts, Comforts,

Counsels, Cautions. Onely as *Iacob* the second time that his sonnes went down into * *Egypt*, commanded them to carry double money in their hands; so I would advice such to apply the former remedies with double diligence, double watchfulnes, double industry, because the malignity of a disease is reveted firmer and deeper in a relapse.

* Gen. 43.12.

XXI. Dialogue.

Whether it bee lawfull to pray for, or to pray against, or to praise God for a wounded Conscience.

Tim. *IS it lawfull for a man to pray to God to visit him with a* wounded Conscience?

Phil. He may and must pray to have his high and hard heart, truly

truly humbled, and bruised with the sight and sense of his sinnes, and with unfained sorrow for the same: but may not explicitely, and directly pray for a *wounded Conscience*, in the highest degree, and extremity thereof.

Tim. *Why interpose you those terms* explicitely *and* directly?

Phil. Because *implicitly*, and by consequence, one may pray for a *wounded Conscience*: Namely, when he submits himselfe to be disposed by Gods pleasure, referring the particulars thereof, wholly to his infinite wisedome, tendring, as I may say, a blank paper to God in his Prayers, and requesting him to write therein what particulars hee pleases; therein generally, and by consequence he may pray for a *wounded Conscience*, in case, God sees the same, for his own glo-

ry

ry, and the parties good; otherwise, directly hee may not pray for it.

Tim. *How prove you the same?*

Phil. First, because a *wounded Conscience* is a judgement, and one of the sorest, as the resemblance of the torments of hell. Now it is not congruous to nature, or grace, for a man to bee a free, and active instrument, purposely to pull downe upon himselfe, the greatest evill that can befall him in this world. Secondly, we have neither direction, nor president of any Saint, recorded in Gods word to justifie and warrant such prayers. Lastly, though praying for a *wounded Conscience* may seemingly scent of pretended humility, it doth really and rankly savour of pride, limiting *the holy One of Israel.* It ill becoming the patient to prescribe to his heavenly Phy-

Physitian, what kinde of Physick he shall minister unto him.

Tim. *But wee may pray for all meanes to increase grace in us, and therefore may pray for a* wounded Conscience, *seeing thereby, at last, piety is improved in* GODS *Servants.*

Phil. Wee may pray for and make use of all means, whereby grace is increased: Namely, such means, as by God are appointed for that purpose; and therefore, by virtue of Gods institution, have both a proportionableness, and a tendency, in order thereunto. But properly those things are not means, or ordained by God, for the increase of piety, which are only accidentally over-ruled to that end, by Gods power, against the intention and inclination of the things themselves. Such is a *wounded Conscience*, being alwayes actually

ally an evill of punishment, and too often occasionally an evill of sinne: The *Byas* whereof doth bend and bow to badnesse, though over-ruled by the aime of Gods Eye, and *strength of his Arme*, it may bring men to the marke of more grace, and goodnesse. God can, and will extract *light* out of *darknesse*, *good* out of *evill*, *order* out of *confusion*, and *comfort* out of a *wounded Conscience*: And yet *darknesse*, *evil*, *confusion*, &c. are not to be prayed for.

Tim. *But a* wounded conscience, *in Gods Children*, *infallibly end in comfort here, or glory hereafter, and therefore is to be desired.*

Phil. Though the ultimate end of a *wounded Conscience* windes off in comfort, yet it brings with it many intermediate mischiefes and maladies, especially as managed by humane corruption: Namely

Namely, dulneſſe in divine ſervice, impatience, taking Gods name in vaine, deſpaire for the time, blaſphemy; which a Saint ſhould decline, not deſire; ſhun, not ſeek; not purſue, but avoid, with his utmoſt endeavours.

Tim. *Is it lawfull poſitively to pray againſt a* wounded conſcience?

Phil. It is, as appeares from an argument taken from the leſſer to the greater. If a man may pray againſt pinching poverty, as wiſe * *Agur* did; then may he much more againſt a *wounded conſcience*, as a far heavier judgement. Secondly, if Gods ſervants may pray for eaſe under their burthens, whereof we ſee divers particulars in that * worthy prayer of *Solomon*; I ſay, if wee pray to God to remove a leſſer judgement by way of ſubvention, queſtionleſſe wee may be-

* Prov. 30.8.

* 1 Kings 8.33.

beseech him to deliver us from the great evill of a *wounded Conscience*, by way of prevention.

Tim. *May one lawfully praise God, for visiting him with a* wounded Conscience?

Phil. Yes verily. First, because it is agreeable to the * will of God, *in every thing to be thankfull*; here is a generall rule, without limitation. Secondly, because the end, why God makes any work, is his own glory; and a *wounded Conscience* being a work of God, he must be glorified in it, especially seeing God shews much mercy therein, as being a punishment on this side of *hell fire*, and lesse then our deserts. As also, because he hath gracious intentions towards the sick soule for the present, and when the maladie is over, the patient shall freely confesse, that *it is good for him that hee was so afflicted*

* 1 Thes. 5. 18. Ephes. 5. 20. Psal. 103 22. & 145. 10.

sticked. Happy then that soule, who in the *lucid intervals* of a wounded conscience can praise God for the same. *Musick* is sweetest neere, or over Rivers, where the *Eccho* thereof is best rebounded by the water. Praise for pensiveness, thanks for tears, and blessing God over the flouds of affliction, makes the most melodious Musick in the eare of heaven.

The conclusion of the Author *to the* READER.

AND now God knows how soon it may be said unto mee, *Physitian heale thy self*, and how quickly I shall stand in need of these Counsels, which I have prescribed to others. Herein I say with *Eli* to * *Samuel*, *It is the Lord, let him doe what seemeth him good*: With *David* to *Zadock*, *Behold here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.* With the * *Disciples to Paul, The will of the Lord be done:* But Oh how easie it is for the mouth to pronounce, or the hand to subscribe these words! But how hard, yea without Gods grace, how impossible, for the heart to submit thereunto! Onely hereof I am confident, that the making of this *Treatise*, shall no wayes cause or hasten a *wounded Conscience* in mee, but rather on the contrary (especially if as it is written *by* mee, it were written *in* me) either prevent it, that it come not at all, or deferre it that it come not so soone, or lighten it, that it fall not so heavy, or shorten it that it last not so long. And if God shall bee pleased hereafter to write * *bitter things against mee*, who have here written the sweetest comforts I could for others, let none insult on my sorrows: But whilest my *wounded Conscience* shall lye like the * *Cripple*, at *the Porch of the Temple*, may such as passe by be pleased to pitty me, and permit this Booke to beg in my behalfe, the charitable Prayers of well disposed People; till divine Providence, shall send some *Peter*, some pious *minister*, perfectly to restore my maimed soule to her former soundnes. *Amen.*

* 1 Sam. 3. 18.
* 2 Sam. 15. 26.
* Acts 21 14.
* Job 13. 26.
* Act. 3. 2

FINIS.